# BAXTER McLENDON

## A BIOGRAPHY

Accession Number
17,515

Shelf Number
MA5
M224B

GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
& COLLEGE
ΧΑΡΙΣ
EPHESIANS
2·8-10

From Gift

Acc Received July 1970

Seminary MA5 M224B c.1
Barr, Walter, 4n 110105 000
Baxter McLendon : a biography
3 9311 00034990 8
GRACE COLL/SEM-MORGAN LIBRARY

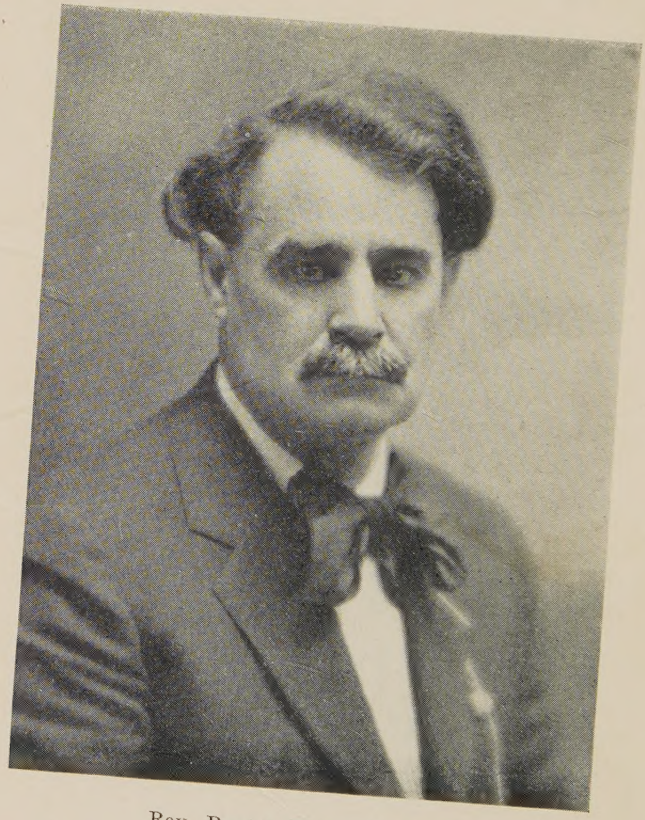
B. F. McLendon

Jer 33-3.

LIBRARY
GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
WINONA LAKE, INDIANA

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023

https://archive.org/details/baxtermclendonbi0000walt



Rev. Baxter Frank McLendon

# BAXTER McLENDON

## A BIOGRAPHY

BY
WALTER BARR

BIBLIOTHECA COMPANY
Bennettsville, S. C.
1928

LIBRARY
GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
WINONA LAKE, INDIANA

Copyright, 1928.
By G. Walter Barr.
All Rights Reserved.

Press of
JACOBS & CO.,
Clinton, S. C.

*With heartfelt thanks to*

*HON. JOHN L. M'LAURIN*

*onetime senator from South Carolina, his native State which he served also in other offices and as a patriotic statesman, diligent scholar and eloquent orator for many years; without his friendship for a poor youth, continuing constantly to the present, this biography would not be worth writing, and except for his aid to the author it could not have been written.*

# CONTENTS


### Destiny

The Pattern in the Loom ..... 5
Some Threads in the Warp ..... 7

### Cross Currents

Pride and Poverty ..... 27
Training a Colt ..... 40
Building a Brain ..... 58
The Keynote of Character ..... 67
As Friendship Fashions ..... 77
A Man in a Morass ..... 87
The Maverick ..... 99
The Forks of the Road ..... 139
The Apprentice Preacher ..... 151

### The Resultant

The Product of the Loom ..... 176
Two Good Reasons ..... 195
Preaching and Politics ..... 204

### The Handiwork

The Rugged Road ..... 224
A Recipe for Preachers ..... 241
A Study in Sermons ..... 252
Dramatic Christianity ..... 262
Some Sweeping Glances ..... 275
One Night ..... 291
The Reward of Results ..... 306
An Episode ..... 320

# BAXTER McLENDON

## A Biography

---

### THE PATTERN IN THE LOOM

This book is the story of a man. It is the true story of a life that begins like a Greek tragedy and ends as Destiny decided.

The story watches inevitable Destiny weaving a web in two continents for several centuries and finally throwing from the loom a pattern of man made up of paradoxes mysterious to most people, a pattern which includes swamps and noxious nothingness as a background for a successful preacher of the gospel; it sees Destiny taking a boy in a poverty stricken home and lifting him into a commanding pulpit, political place of power, and owner of the riches of the love of a million friends.

This is the story of a life which exceeds many novels in interesting action, which has a plot as complicated as most detective stories, and which has some incidents stranger than fiction because they are true.

Always it is the story of Omnipotent Destiny weaving in the loom of Fate a web the warp of which is composed of traits inherited from Dennis McLendon, the Scotch Presbyterian, and Marshall Swan, the cultured fox hunter, and the ancestors behind them in Britain.

The web is also interlaced by Destiny's artistry with the tragedies and influences of war at its worst and a peace that was worse than war—the environment of a childhood that had little but heartrending tragedy, lack of understanding and bloody bruises that hurt less than

the torturing hot irons thrust by careless people into the little heart and mind of a boy.

Then there is that one bright, strong thread running straight through the pattern in Destiny's loom, for thirteen years almost hid under the warp, and then for other years dominating the design.

This biography is a story, not a chronology nor a compilation. It is a study of one man in the making, in the laboratory of modern biography which seeks to discover precisely what the man is, and why he is what his actions show him to be. It is written, because the narrative seems to make a tale worth the while of the lover of good stories. It is as accurate as the blue print of an engineer and constructed with the truth as the only objective. The man himself had no influence toward any deviation from exact truth and sought to exert none.

Thomas McLendon was laboriously shaving one Sunday morning, a rite preparatory to taking his place on the platform as superintendent of the Sunday school at Ebenezer church. His young son Baxter accidentally jostled him, which was irritating, not to say dangerous, and he gave the boy a smart push that almost upset the lad.

The son recovered his balance and instead of apologising or explaining, he whistled a cadence that expressed impudence as only a boy can be impudent without an articulate word. The father called Baxter to him and slapped him soundly; the boy again uttered that impudent whistle. The razor strop was handy, and the father felt the necessity of teaching a son to honor his parent; also, he believed repentance in a small boy is expressed only in tears. It became a contest between the grievous strop and the boy's self control against pain. The boy whistled the same cadence every time the father experimentally stopped. A bundle of more effective peach tree sprouts replaced the strop, but the boy whistled the same impudent strain at every intermission to take a fresh sprout as each was worn out.

The father felt an imperative duty to whip a properly respectful spirit into his son, in accordance with some texts in the Bible. Hours passed, and noon came, the Sunday school forgotten in that epic contest of wills. The available sprouts worn out on the back of the boy without result, a higher power must be called upon.

The father knelt at a wooden chair and prayed loud and fervently that the son might submit to the parental respect ordained by God. Each heartfelt amen was echoed by that

same whistle. Unanswered prayer, exhaustion of the supply of peachtree sprouts and weariness of the flesh combined to give the boy the victory with a bruised and sore back—and mouth still puckered in that whistle.

But the determined father, upheld by a strong sense of duty to bring up a boy in the way he should go, only changed his method. He did not speak to his son for three weeks, while both their hearts were bleeding in chancery at the wall between them. The father gave up first.

Not long, as time flies, before that tragedy of whistling and prayer and heartaches, the same boy was taken by his mother one afternoon for one of the usual visits to his grandmother who lived across the pine woods. It was evening when the mother prepared to return home, and the boy begged to be allowed to stay all night, which his mother explained was impossible.

"If I must go, I won't open my eyes till I get home," the boy exclaimed with that ingenuity for reprisal found only in determined small boys.

The way home was a narrow path through the woods, requiring care in daylight and difficult at night even with the moon nearly full. The mother started home with a command to the boy to follow her closely. With eyes tightly shut, the boy was soon bumping into stumps, falling into holes and colliding with trees. His mother yanked him out into the smoother path and told him to open his eyes and walk right. The boy kept his eyes closed. His mother, with a plentiful supply of sprouts at hand, whipped him all the way home. His whole back was bruised blue, and blood ran down his little legs. The mother had the religious zeal of the flagellants seeking to scourge demons out of the body for the soul's sake. Only when he heard his father's voice asking about the blood soaking

through the clothes, did the boy open his eyes, because he knew he was at home.

The comment of his grandmother on this incident was prophetic. With the prescience of an aged Scotch seer, or the insight of all canny Scots, she remarked:

"That boy'll either be hung or preach one!"

Out of such deeply religious, determined and chastening parents was Baxter Frank McLendon born, April 14, 1879, near Little Rock, South Carolina, on the plantation of Jacob R. Townsend, of which his father was overseer as one result of the misfortunes of the civil war.

His father, Thomas A. McLendon, impoverished by that war, was too young to fight in it, but did his part by killing wild hogs to supply meat for the women for ten miles around his home. Independent and proud, without much schooling, compelled to work hard to support his family, he was a fox hunter with a pack of hounds and a civic worker who had the spirit of the more modern Rotarian. The father participated in the cares and amusements of the men of his neighborhood from riding after fox hounds to activity in the Red Shirts, an organization to intimidate the carpetbagger and scalawag while the original KuKlux were frightening the negroes.

Whatever material assets he had, he was rich mentally. He had a large fund of information, especially about government, and he often talked at home about the principles of good government in a republic. Self educated chiefly, he had a good teacher and learned to think straight and deep into the heart of things.

"Father was the most taciturn man I've ever seen," the son says, "but when he did talk, he said something worth while." There is abundant evidence that he loved his son with a devotion as deep as it was expressionless; the wise will see the wondrous love in that scene of the

whistling boy and the worn out bundle of peach tree sprouts punctuating prayer with red welts. Fixedness of purpose was in that father, too, the same incident proves.

Inflexibility is what his face expressed most. Its features were not mobile, but seemed carved out of granite. The nose was aquiline, the eyes black, sharp and shining. His hair was jet black, and his head was set on broad, strong shoulders over a deep chest the muscles of which stood out like cables.

The mother of the boy had been Maggie Swan, of Irish stock with a dash of Dutch blood from one ancestor in Holland. She had a distinct strain of intellectuality in her composition and compensated for her husband's lack of expression.

"Mother was a great conversationalist and one of the greatest word painters I've ever seen—she word painted everything she saw," the son remarked reminiscently one day. She had no more schooling than her husband, for schools were forgotten while they were adolescent for the four years of internecine strife; she seems to have done less studying about true inwardness of things than did her husband, but to have observed more than he did of the world around her and to have drunk into her soul its beauties and implications. Her people came from Ulster, so it was a militant Christianity she had, as witness the lashing walk home with the boy along the woods path.

At this time, and for the rest of their lives, the parents of the future evangelist were members of the Methodist church, having moved into a community where there was no Presbyterian church, to which latter denomination their own parents and ancestors belonged.

The home in which Baxter McLendon was a child was set in an overseer's house and was garnished with uncouth accessories—but it was the kind of home life to develop

children into good, selfreliant, strong characters. It was a little house on the edge of an almost impenetrable swamp, and its one room was made into two by a calico curtain hung for a partition. Almost everything in it was homemade. The father had fashioned the bed with the best carpentry he could muster and had made the table of pine wood. But even with such deterrent conditions, the mother kept it all spotlessly clean. She kept the floor as white as the deck of a millionaire's yacht by constant scrubbing with homemade soap and lye leached in the ash hopper in the yard. The wooden water bucket was kept as clean as any accessory of a surgical operating room. The bed linen was spotlessly white, the dishes glistened in the cupboard, and at least twice a week, little Baxter had the task of scouring the cutlery by thrusting the knives and forks and spoons many times into the sandy soil in the yard to keep them scoured as bright as steel can shine.

When the boy got up in the morning at four o'clock and dressed himself, he went out to a gleaming tin pan to wash his hands and face, more or less, and after sloshing the water over his head and wiping his face on a towel —that had been a flour sack before it was split lengthwise —he combed his hair with a big comb with large teeth in one half its length to pull out tangles and fine teeth in the other end for another purpose to which his mother gave attention at times.

Mealtime was the occasion for the family communion together. Breakfast was very much like dinner and supper. The three meals had different names designating the time of day they were eaten, but no difference of consequence in kind or quality. All of them were monotonous in their menus, for nobody had heard of calories nor vitamines, and a balanced ration was unthought of.

There was corn pone, thin, delicious and nutritious

enough to satisfy the appetites of growing children. The meat was a chunk of home cured bacon sunk in a miniature sea of its own melted fat very often. The big tin pan near the center of the table was filled with collards, sometimes replaced with blackeyed peas. Tin was the material of most of the table service as it was not subject to breakage like porcelain or glass. A huge tin coffee pot stood at the mother's right hand softly breathing a delightfully odorous vapor from its triangular spout.

All that is but an index to the commonplaces of poverty in the South where so soon after the civil war poverty was itself a commonplace. One distinguishing feature of the McLendon family table illuminates the difference between that family and those home influences and raises it above its neighbors. The mother often placed in the center of the table a bouquet of wild flowers in the neck of a bottle or in a vase which otherwise was a dish or a jar. Those fresh wild flowers denote the persistent outcroppings of a refinement and a constant reaching for better things that were inborn and so much a part of the blood as to refuse to be repressed entirely by any circumstances.

The father sat at one end of the table, the mother at the other end, and the three children, Baxter, Murray, and Mary, along its side. The covering of the table was bright colored oilcloth which need not be removed, but could be washed off clean with a cloth. The plates, of course, were of tin, shallow tin pans large enough to hold a generous meal.

The father would take the tin pan of a child, fill it nearly full of collards, fork a big piece of bacon on top, and hand it to the child. A child began eating as soon as it got its ration, without waiting for the others to be served, and to each of them the father tossed a piece of

the thin corn bread. The mother in the meantime had poured a pint tin cup of coffee for each one. They were all eating vociferously within less time than it takes for a modern child to unfold and adjust its napkin and complain about the food set before it.

They ate vigorously. Knives shoveled collards into mouths, and forks were used only to pitch mouthfuls of bacon into the opening between the lips. If the coffee was too hot, which it generally was, it was cooled and drunk from a saucer. It was always black coffee and strong, albeit very good coffee, for Mocha and Java was easier to obtain then than now.

There was one never to be forgotten variation in the meals. Every Sunday morning there was biscuits for breakfast.

That McLendon family made mealtime an occasion for their closest association and most intimate intercourse. The children chattered about childish things; the mother talked of the latest gossip that had filtered in—about the condition of one neighbor's very sick baby; how they thought a man living down the road had the cancer; that a popular woman they all knew had broken her arm by a fall; or that Miss Mary Alice was going away to school—but never, in years on end of daily gossip, one word of finding fault with another, one sting stuck into a reputation, nor anything but friendly comment or unstinted praise. The father said but little, and what he did say was condensed advice toward right living, as a rule; occasionally he would comment on the conduct of a fox hound. The children of that family who are still alive remember those meal times as bright spots in an otherwise rather drab existence.

There remains in their memory another time that seems rose colored even after all these years. It was the evening

after the day's work was done, in the interval between washing their bare feet and bedtime. Sometimes the father was there, but often he was out fox hunting, or coon hunting, of nights. Those plantation nights were never forgotten by little Baxter.

His mother gathered her three bairns around her knee and told them stories. She was one of those rare teller of tales who could visualize for her children the things she depicted in words and could make pictures out of sentences.

She told stories of fox chases by her father, old Marshall Swan, who always maintained that he had the best hounds in North Carolina and sometimes proved it by the vivid accounts he told in sonorous, scholarly language of their prowess and stamina; and when his daughter told similar stories to her children, they heard the baying of the hounds running down wind and saw the sly fox trotting under the hill.

She told them stories, more exciting than a Western reel on the screen, because more real and closer to home, of Sherman's raid through that same country after he turned from the sea at Savannah to join the other Yankee army in Virginia. She painted a moving word picture of Wheeler's men in a cavalry charge that stirred the blood and made faces glow. She told less stirring, but equally dramatic, stories of Moses the baby along the Egyptian creek and Moses the leader of a host of people into the promised land. She told the tale of Joseph and his colored coat and his wicked brothers and credulous father. She told the tragedy of the prodigal son, and the children felt that he was a neighbor boy. She told them stories from history profane and Biblical, far away and nearby, ancient and modern, exciting stories and creepy stories, but always interesting stories that were pictures in words.

The real glory that shone in that family was the love of the parents for each other. They remained lovers until death parted them. That love dominated the affairs of the family and indirectly the first impressions of the children, who never heard a cross or impatient word uttered by either parent to the other. The effect of this must have been great on children at the impressionable age. It seems to have been greater than the piety of the parents in its impressions on those children. How it impressed little Baxter is shown by his saying forty years later:

"Father and mother were lovers. I never saw him leave the home that he didn't put his arm around Ma's neck and kiss her. I never saw him come into the home that she didn't meet him at the door. I can still see his big arms around her and his kisses on her face, and I can still hear him say, 'Jinny, I love you!'"

Both the parents of Baxter McLendon were pious folk, God fearing and devoted to religious duty, as certain episodes testify. They were carefully observant of all the ordinances. Every night, a part of the Bible was read, and prayers ascended to the Omnipotent. Every morning, the father gathered the three children to him and with his arms around them knelt before the only king he recognized to petition that they all might finally be saved to the glory of God. Since they were up and about before daylight, little Baxter often held a little brass lamp with a round wick to enable his father to see the print in the Bible at the morning prayers preceding the day's work. Two of the three children became ministers of His word, and the other is a christian woman. But it was a long, rough road that one of them, little Baxter, was to travel from that family altar to a pulpit.

At the impressionable age of five years, the son who was to do so much for the cause of the Christ witnessed

something that was one of the determining, molding impressions on childhood which fix the characteristics of the adult. It was a raw March day, and the wind was blowing hard and cold. His father was plowing for cotton back by the creek. Suddenly his wife and little son saw him charging afoot across the intervening field, running at the top of his speed. He dashed into the yard, enfolded his wife in his strong arms, and cried out, "Jinny, I met God down there!" He loosed his wife after a tremendous hug, and walked back and forth before the house, clapping his hands and shouting praises to the Lord. Then he picked up little Baxter and folded the boy to his big, strong bosom, kissing the little face wet with the happy tears of the father overflowing over swarthy cheeks from sparkling eyes.

"When he put me down," the son says now, "all the infidels out of hell couldn't have made me believe there wasn't a reality in the christian religion."

The poverty and uncouthness of that McLendon home in the overseer's house did not crowd out a proper self-respect. There was the oilcloth covered table with the corn pone, the bacon and the collards, the biscuits only on Sunday, the tin dishes and the blackeyed peas, but there was also the ability to tell stories that thrilled, the skill in breeding good fox hounds and hunting them, the reverence for the God that cares for the sparrows and all men equally, the reputation of being one of the best of overseers; and there was also the blood of the clan McLendon and the Swans through the generations—and so there was also a proper pride that prevented pettiness, and as much of noblesse oblige as was ever felt by cotton baron in Carolina, or laird in the Highlands.

"They had good blood flowing through their veins," the son sums up his parents in one of his sermons, "and they

were proud as peacocks; and if there was ever a God fearing, Christ serving, Holy Ghost obeying place, it was my home."

They had a right to proper pride in their blood strains. The father of Thomas A. McLendon was Benjamin McLendon who fought in the fratricidal war that was to impoverish him when it ended. He was respected by everybody who knew him, and he was as powerful in pioneer pugilism as in prayer—and he was a highlander of North Carolina and a Scotch Presbyterian.

During the chaos immediately after the civil war, he moved down into South Carolina and became a cotton grower as a tenant on the Drake plantation not far from Bennettsville. With his new neighbors he at once took his place as a man always to be trusted, of strong character, strict honesty, much industry and rugged piety of the Scotch type. He supported his large family well, but the size of that family made it impossible for him ever to become rich, even if the conditions there after the war would have permitted that. He married Eliza Hill in North Carolina and she was a true helpmeet to him throughout his life.

Dennis McLendon, the father of Benjamin, was the son of an elder Dennis McLendon who is the immigrant great-grandfather of Baxter. This ancestor of the evangelist came from Scotland in time to fight for liberty in the American Revolution. From the generalities of the large migration of Scotch families to the Carolinas one argues that the elder Dennis McLendon came from Argyleshire; from certain features of religious characteristics and certain political events in Scotland at the time, another believes the McLendon family lived nearer the constantly warring border about which Sir Walter Scott has written so much. The name was originally MacLendon, but the

American branch of the family has not been captious about the prefix, so that it was soon Americanised into the Irish form of McLendon.

Like all the many Scottish families migrating to the Carolinas about the same time, the McLendons were forceful, successful people. They had to be courageous to risk the terrors of a practically unknown land with little communication with the British Isles. They must have been enterprising and forceful to undertake such a radical change of base. Courage, forcefulness and enterprise spell success in every clime and every century. In the McLendons, these traits were passed on to the blood of their progeny to make a successful evangelist. All the Scotch who emigrated to America in the Eighteenth century founded American families which generally became first families in every way. Many of their descendants became cotton barons of quite as much power and property as the lairds who remained in Caledonia.

They also transplanted to America the ancient spirit of the clan and the alliances and feuds between the clans. To this day, often unconscious of the prime reason back a century and more in Scotland, certain families feel an urge to help another, as other families are in opposition always, in politics, business and other modern activities in the Carolinas. It is the persistency of inborn and inbred instincts beginning in another era in the Highlands and on the Border, when the plaid was the distinguishing colors in battle. That spirit of the clan is easily discernible in a scion of one of those old families, modified by modern conditions, but making a present day preacher as permanent in his friendships as were his Scottish ancestors centuries ago in their devotion to their allies among the clans.

The maternal side of the house into which Baxter F.

McLendon was born, the Swans, is not so old in America as the McLendons, for the father of Maggie Swan McLendon was born in Ireland. But he came to America in his mother's arms, a baby only seven months old, and the mere statement of his birthplace is deceptive, for he arrived over a hundred years ago.

The infant immigrant was named Marshall Swan, and his father died a short time before his mother brought him to North Carolina. The Swans were Presbyterians and hence doubtless from a county in the northern part of Ireland. The mother of Maggie Swan was born Polly Starns, and her father was Johnny Starns who came from Holland.

Marshall Swan, destined to be the grandfather of Baxter F. McLendon, became a landowner in the region around Davidson, North Carolina. He was a man of strong physique, courtly manners and excellent education. Of a generation when scarcely anybody went to college, and there were only a few colleges in America, each with a few students attracted from the most intellectual group of young men scattered thinly all over the country, he belonged to that class of young intelligentia. Reared in Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, he somehow achieved schooling enough to enable him to enter the sophomore class of Davidson college in 1849, and he attended that college for several years, although he did not graduate with his class of 1852.

His scholarship was evident to all who came in contact with him, to the day of his death. His conversation was always in perfectly correct English, his diction refined at a time when that kind of verbiage was not common there, and with the dignity of one to the manor born and the manners of a polished courtier, he impressed the whole countryside with his personality. His loyalty to

friends and courtesy to everybody made him popular with all classes of people, not only as a young man, but among the citizens of his adopted state and community after he moved to South Carolina and the Rogers plantation.

Indeed, it was his sterling qualities that caused that move. In the troublous times of reconstruction, after one of the many hand to hand conflicts between citizens and carpetbaggers, one of the Rogers family found it expedient to hide out in a swamp. Marshall Swan and his wife cooked and carried food to the man in the swamp for weeks, until it was safe for him to go home. A little later, Mr. Rogers went up into North Carolina, found Marshall Swan in financial straits as a result of post bellum conditions, and brought him down to the Rogers plantation to spend the rest of his days.

The two families have been in alliance ever since, and Baxter F. McLendon today will fight for a Rogers as quickly as for his own kin. Doubtless, several of the characteristics in Baxter McLendon came to him from his grandfather, Marshall Swan, including his dignity, constant courtesy and yearning for an education to the extent of getting one under great difficulties. Also, the effect of having Marshall Swan's wife for a grandmother is perceptible today in the evangelist.

Back nearly two centuries in his maternal ancestry is the great-grandfather of Baxter F. McLendon, who was born about 1750, and was a captain and later major in the Continental army before he settled down after the Revolution as a man of affairs and a slave owner in North Carolina. His name was Edward Richardson, the father of Sally Richardson who became mother of the wife of Marshall Swan. He was born in Virginia and died at the age of eighty-four in North Carolina to which colony he moved about 1772. There he settled at the head waters

of Richardson creek, named in his honor. He attended church at old Waxhaws with Andrew Jackson, seventeen years younger and was his lifelong friend. Many of his descendants are living as prominent citizens of North Carolina. He fought valiantly in many of the conflicts of the Revolution, including Buford and Kings Mountain, and after the latter battle he was promoted from captain to major for bravery. He becomes important in this study of his evangelist descendant especially on account of one event in his life full of force and thrills and dangers overcome.

Once while at home on furlough, Major Richardson was kidnapped by sixteen Tories of his neighborhood who greatly feared him. They rudely tore him out of his home at sundown one evening, and he had time only to whisper to his wife of a couple of years, who had been Sallie Pierce, of Virginia, to hurry for help to Captain Brinkley, also on furlough at his home some miles across country. As soon as the Tory party surrounding her husband was out of sight, Mrs. Richardson mounted a horse and rode fast for aid. Captain Brinkley quickly raised a rescue party of twenty patriots.

The Tory captors of Major Richardson took him to Roughedge where they stopped to camp and determine his fate. They decided that to be death. They were actually in the act of hanging him to a tree, when Captain Brinkley's company of rescuers dashed in upon them, captured them all, and took the rope from the neck of the patriot.

Major Edward Richardson made himself the personification of retribution and a demonstration of the adage about sauce for the goose being sauce for the gander. He said those sixteen Tories who had been so jubilantly hanging him a few minutes before had been courting death and

lost, and the tables were turned. As Captain Brinkley led out the sixteen kidnappers seriatim, Major Edward Richardson shot them one at a time with a gun carrying twenty-five buckshot as a charge. That gun is still in the possession of one branch of his family, and the mound of the single grave in which the sixteen raiding Tories were buried is still to be seen at Roughedge.*

Courage and strength of character like that is pretty sure to be transmitted to the progeny. The sixteen Tories were a little gory in the end, but like whisky and bear hunting they were only signs of the times, and plenty of us may wish we had inherited some of that forcefulness and spirit from some ancestor. The basic facts in the life of Major Edward Richardson are reflected in his great-grandson as courage and determination, although he is too tender hearted now to kill sixteen enemies in a regular sequence like a boy eating cookies.

As horsemen scan the pedigree of a thoroughbred after it has won the derby, finding stamina here and courage there and speed everywhere through the generations, one may look through the ancestry of this thoroughbred, after he has won big contests of character and broken world's records of evangelism, to some profit. And as the pedigrees of Derby winners all have origins in a couple of strains of blood, so this present ancestral line runs back into the well marked and universally accepted traits of two peoples, the Scots and the Hibernians.

That baby boy born in the overseer's house on the South Carolina plantation entered the world that mid-April day with some facial features, pigment to color hair, and size of bone structure, already determined and fixed by the forces behind his begetting; not less was the pat-

* The authority for the facts about Major Edward Richardson is M. H. Richardson, Esq., of Monroe, N. C., genealogist of the family.

tern of his brain cells formed by the same forces and his characteristics thus fixed.

So in another continent and centuries later, we see his father spending most of one Sunday alternately beating and praying over the small boy to the glory of God; and see his mother scourging him through the woods with his blood streaming from his back for the salvation of his soul.

And in another generation and much wider sphere of influence, that boy become a man makes it his business to declare the glory of God and save souls, by other methods, but with all the zeal of his parents and forefathers.

The same two episodes of the two whippings indicate much stubbornness in his parents, albeit of somewhat different types. His father had simple persistency inherent in his nature which did not allow him to look back when he had set his hand to any plow, or his will to any task. His mother had that other kind of persistency which is developed in the highest degree in a combat—witness the long struggle for the independence of the Emerald Isle, or the chase after a criminal by a policeman. A combination of these two phases of persistency was molded into the character of that baby born on that plantation, and the combination seems more effective, because more adaptable, than either phase in itself.

Coming from both national stocks and transmitted unimpaired through his American ancestors, that baby had inborn courage—both the moral courage of the Scots who never were entirely subdued by centuries of English pressure, and the physical courage of the Irish who discard fear in a fight. The combination is a greater courage, of higher quality, than either alone.

Now, of course, persistency approaching obstinacy, plus high courage, both moral and physical, equals self-

will. And that baby was born with selfwill already developed to a high power.

The independence of the Scotch as individuals was the basic cause of the history of that country for centuries. It was for more individual independence that the first Dennis McLendon came to America, and the lives of all his progeny on this continent show plenty of that same independent spirit. Any study of Irish organizations leads inevitably to the clashing of factions due to individual independence of the units. And that baby McLendon of 1879 came into the April sunshine blinking its eyes with all the accumulated independence of those generations of Scotch and Irish forebears, albeit it was tempered by the Irish smile of persuasion and dignity combined.

Pride is a concomitant of independence. The Scotch pride is hard and cold and in the last analysis has a good deal of admiration for self. The Irish pride is for specific things possessed or achieved, of riches gained or honors won, in good done, or in a successful crime. Both these kinds of pride were born in that baby. It was born proud that it was Baxter McLendon, proud of its parents, grandparents and all the McLendon clan; also it was born with germs, to develop by natural law, of pride in the goodness and mentality of the Swans and what they had accomplished in self development along right lines. The combination made a pride as stiff as a claymore and as logical and proper as the dignity of a college president.

In that baby was concentrated the spirit of the clan which had survived through many generations and many centuries, perhaps the dominant force in Scottish life; the clan spirit that survives even today in this great democracy where Scotch families settled long ago and have grown into communities. In that baby was born, too, from its mother's warm blood, that more tender Irish love for

the family and its members, a love that knows no bounds and ever flows out to become goodwill for everybody else —pure philanthropy, love for one's fellow men, conformance to the eleventh commandment by the Lord, Jesus Christ. In that baby Baxter McLendon, clannishness and philanthropy united to make the germ like a seed that grows into a great tree which in turn splits the rock cliff from the crevice in which it grows. This manifestation persists until today with a force that overwhelms all else in his characteristics time and again and causes joyous self sacrifices for his kin, his friends and for humanity. The easiest thing for him to do is to fight, not for himself, but for his friends. That baby was born to fight.

In it were other forces, very different, that were to make themselves felt later in life. The Witch of Endor, the collapse of Macbeth when the forest moved, a thousand tales told until they were legendary, these and other things of record show the intense fatalism of the Scots, translated in one era into the more christian doctrine, that whatever is foreordained to occur will take place at the appointed time by divine decree. That Scotch fatalism, absorbed by that baby when it was begotten, was to impress upon it in boyhood and youth a design, mysterious as compelling, that like a mariner's compass should steer the child, the youth, and the man over storm tossed seas into a port that otherwise could not have been reached. It may well be that this interesting person might not have kept the course for so many years, because fatalism held the helm straight, had not that baby with its mother's Irish blood knowing banshee and bogie also had, like the Scots, a feeling for second sight and warlock grim, ghosts and sprites and other things not a part of our prosaic philosophy but common in poets.

With the father the most taciturn of men, and a mother

a master of word painting, that baby was born to become a man who would break the silence of a full hour by a remark—generally a question—entirely irrelevant to the thought of whoever happened to be with him; and at other times exude language like a mountain spring become a torrent of oratory.

Two traits seem not to have been transmitted from both parents—traits that became marked in the later life of that boy baby. He did not take from his Scotch father any characteristic carrying out of plans made for the day or the future with a canniness containing some selfishness —the order and system so dear to the incomparable Scotch merchants is a minus quantity in the man to which that baby grew. He never had any semblance of Scotch thrift; he did get from his mother's side of his parantage a prodigality of generosity that in manhood dissipated fortunes among his friends and scattered his income as fast as it was made all over a large territory and big crowd of people many of whom were unappreciative and some grasping.

Thus, molded in the matrix of the past generations, that baby opened its eyes for the first time upon the world. It was to grow up among influences that would encourage some traits and deter others; among forces that would swirl around it and beat upon its character strenuously, sometimes tragically, adding here and forcing down there, making the baby into a full grown man—a man of dramatic, soul stirring, heart breaking, glorious, sordid experiences—but a man who never escaped from the traits impressed upon him by his ancestors before his birth that April day on the Townsend plantation.

In the very beginning that baby boy found himself in a highly organized and sharply differentiated society of human beings. The South of that day, a dozen years after the war between the states had ended, still maintained its antebellum traditions and standards.

There were the aristocrats of land and wealth, cotton barons and lords of vast domains by virtue of good fee simple titles; there were the peasants, negroes trying to adjust themselves to a technical freedom and the new problems of self-support, the same negroes who recently had been slaves and were still serfs of circumstances.

These overlords and these serfs, in almost equal numbers, made up nearly all the population of the Carolinas. But there were also a few poor whites—more than before the war—who belonged to neither caste. They were tenant farmers and overseers of plantations. They could not associate with the lords and barons socially and would not look upon the negroes except with contempt. They were in a class apart and so few in number that each was isolated rather completely insofar as social contacts were concerned.

Thomas A. McLendon was an overseer of that middle class which was refused the hand of those above and extended the mailed fist toward the class below. The home in which his baby opened its eyes that April day lacked most of the things that gave distinction to the big plantation house, the castle of the cotton barony. In its appointments it was not much above the cabins of the negroes, and the chief difference—wide enough for all that—was the difference between Anglo-Saxon and African

blood; between that ancestry leading back to Scotland and Ireland and that leading by a shorter route back to the Soudan.

But that one feature—the blood in the veins of that baby—was never overlooked for an instant by anybody in the family. The baby's father was intensely proud of the McLendons, and its mother was equally proud of the Swans. Both were jealously proud of the mixture of these two strains of blue blood in their baby. As soon as he could sense any abstraction, the youngster felt this pride surcharging the family and imbibed a full measure of it himself.

Such things as social status are always taken for granted in a real aristocracy, and no word was ever spoken about the status of the McLendon family and its baby boy. But constantly—and within a few years continuously—that boy was silently maintaining his right to look any of the community eye to eye as an equal. He was arguing it—contesting it—debating it vigorously—maintaining it savagely—but always silently and within his own consciousness only.

In the meantime, his father attended to his duties on the plantation, and his mother was the housewife. The father hunted to hounds at every opportunity, and other owners of kennels came to visit and talk of dogs and hunts. Young Baxter liked exceeding well to hear those talks of evenings and at an early age had learned a good deal about hounds. But he never quit his brooding insistence to himself that there was a great unfairness in their being so poor.

Sometimes in the evening, neighbors and kin would come visiting. Then the boy listened entranced to discussions about hounds; how old Louder had distinguished himself recently; how the younger Bob gave promise to

be one of the best dogs in all South Carolina; the details of the hunt of last week; tales and talks to be heard only when enthusiastic hunters foregather in the blaze of the lightwood fire; stories of dogs that were personified and felt to be more human than some folks.

Usually the landlord, Mr. George Crosland, would be there. Beside the landlord, in the light of the fire in the McLendon cabin there might be Ad Crosland, a near neighbor, who kept a few hounds, and Grandfather Marshall Swan, all spending the evening with Tom McLendon. It was a great occasion in that home when Grandpa Swan came to spend the night there. He was an excellent conversationalist with real powers of delineation in word pictures, and when he was present, the finer points of fox hunting would be discussed until late in the night. Baxter would be sitting on the floor in front of the big fireplace, his wide, bright eyes fixed on the faces of his elders and drinking in avidly every word they said.

In those days good corn likker could be had for two dollars a gallon. The women folks went to bed early. A two gallon jug with a corncob stopper had been placed on the table with tin cups, perhaps a glass tumbler, but these last were generally kept for company. Each man carefully poured his own drink with due solemnity. It was another time with other customs that have disappeared. In the midst of the conversation, Grandfather Swan would say to his daughter, Jennie McLendon:

"Jane, please hand me that jug." Even in that clime where jugs were to men as rapiers to the three guardsmen, Marshall Swan was remarked for the charm with which he could take a drink of likker. With all the grace of a Delsarte gesture he would hang the jug on his thumb, hold it over his arm and let the likker flow gently into a glass, and as he poured he would say:

"George, a lot of these dadgasted hypocrites say it's a sin for a man to take a drink of whiskey. I've been a christian all my life, and a little of this will hurt nobody . . . . . George, take a little nip of this; it's extra good and will invigorate you."

Mr. George Crosland would wink at Tom McLendon and say:

"Mr. Swan, in what way is our dogs better than the dogs you use to own?"

At that prodding, Grandfather Marshall Swan would straighten up to his full height, smite with one hand his long white whiskers and retort:

"Why, George, your dogs and Tommy's in no way compare with mine. For instance, that bitch of yours, Cry, I wouldn't have her!"

"Why, Mr. Swan, she ran a fox out here at the old meadow for five hours and led the pack and was there at the catching."

"Ah!" the old man would insist, "Tut! Tut! I would never think of breeding her. Her mouth is too weak, her feet are not strong enough, and her tail is too keen and doesn't show the proper strength at the root.

"If you fellows could have been in a fox race that Joel Helms and I were in! The dogs struck just the least bit north of Monroe, struck out toward old Cabarrus, came down by Alison Winchester's, across the old camp ground, swung in a circuitous route across Johnny Starns' plantation, and headed in the direction of Neely Richardson's, going straight towards Waxhaw. We spared not horseflesh and rode at full speed into Waxhaw, and Joel McClain met us, telling us the dogs had passed at least half an hour before we arrived there, going toward Lancaster Court House, South Carolina . . . Three days from that time, we received intelligence from Alex Springs that the

dogs had come in at the setting of the sun, five miles east of Lancaster."

Old Marshall Swan's voice rumbled sonorously and was musically modulated. His sentences rolled out somewhat ponderously, the words those of a scholarly-minded man, who had been a student at Davidson college. He had entered the sophomore class when he went to college at a time when only the most ambitious for learning went to college at all, and all college men were classical scholars of culture in constant use. Marshall Swan kept up his familiarity with Latin authors to the day of his death.

And as hounds are given quality when puppies, so men are molded while boys. The talks before his father's fireplace occurred scores and hundreds of times, and many similar evenings little Baxter absorbed into his being. Forgetfulness has blurred the words and some of the stories, but the effect of those plantation nights remains as plain as the impress of a trowel upon crystalizing concrete.

Those were red letter nights for the little boy, and to this day he can repeat some of the stories. He has scores of hounds of his own now, and he knows every one as he knows his other friends. Those talks in the firelight to which he listened so eagerly had a good deal to do with his future; for one thing, they instilled in him such a love for the great outdoors that it has persisted through all the years that have flown by since.

The springs full of delight followed the short winters and ushered in the long summers—and the boy's mind was never rid of that feeling of injustice in their poverty and especially in the caste system and his place in it. It never ceased to hunger for kindness—not the type of kindness given a cat or dog, but the kind emanating from an appreciative mind to a brother human being. Thus hunger was satisfied seldom enough in that envi-

ronment. The instances of appreciation of anything in him above the clods were so few that he can recount them all now, after forty years.

One occurred one evening on his way home from the first school he attended. In the edge of town, he was taken violently ill, and a young man took him to the home of a woman whom the little Baxter never forgot.

"Whose little black eyed boy are you?" she asked.

"Mr. Tom McLendon's," he replied.

"The one who lives down here on the George Crosland plantation?" she further identified, and then when the boy had answered, she said:

"Well, if you'll get an education, with those eyes that you have, you'll make good in life."

The simple, casual remark of that woman started a torrent through that starved soul, that carried little Baxter out of himself. He forgot why he was there—forgot he was sick—sprang away from her, ran down the street and out the road to his home on the plantation, hysterically shouting and crying. His parents rushed out to meet him, asking whether he was sick, he had been hurt, or somebody had mistreated him.

He told them he had to wear old homemade rags his Ma had made for him and the other boys had store bought clothes; that he had on brass toed brogans and the other boys nice buttoned shoes; he savagely pictured the contrasts between his garb and that of the other school children. His father clasped the poor little boy in his arms and with gushing tears choking his voice proudly said:

"Son, don't you ever step on a worm or bow to a king!"

The son has been true to that maxim ever since, and he never ceased to revere the woman who gave him the first kind word he had ever heard outside his own home.

Photo by Ackley

The house in which Baxter F. McLendon spent part of his childhood has been moved a short distance from its original site and converted into a plantation storehouse. A few days after he became forty-eight years old, when he went with a photographer to get this picture, he searched for and found a nail scratch on the door he had seen his father make when he was a very young child. The associations aroused had lifted the incident into his remarkable memory after over two score years.

He pondered on her words for a long time; then he again ran down the road shaking his fist in the air and saying to himself, "I will make a man!" Years later he stood reverently with bent and bowed head at the grave of that woman, Mrs. C. M. Weatherly, and none of the other panegyrics at that funeral equalled the one that came from the heart of Baxter McLendon.

He came to know everybody in the vicinity—when he was two years old, his father had moved near Bennettsville to be overseer of the Crosland plantation—to know them as a child knows grown-ups and is attracted or repelled by them. But this boy felt a deep antagonism to them all—the antagonism of a combatant in a war—and in this case the war was that of a small boy against a strongly intrenched caste system.

Nobody around him knew this. He really did not know it himself. He only felt it to the core of his boyhood nature. If he made any attempt to analyze it, he decided it was pride in the McLendons and their feats and in the Swans and what they had done, in his grandfathers and parents, in their knowledge of hound dogs and skill in bagging the foxes, in himself and his blood—and in his very poverty!

The sense of being unjustly fixed in the bottom layer of the sociological cake, combined with his pride which was comparable to the pride of the outcast Lucifer, shaped his soul so early that he never moved entirely out of the influence of that combination of forces.

His pride swelled when his kin came down from North Carolina to visit. Their talk was that of the hill folk, rather than that of hunting foxes in the low country. They had epics to tell, as the bards in the Scottish highlands had epics to sing to other generations of them.

The boy heard how two of his mother's cousins, Mace

Richardson and John Fincher, had fought until they both fell exhausted from their exertions. He drank in all the garish details of the fight John Bull McLendon had over in Tennessee with a man never whipped before John Bull made him cry enough. The little fellow, so quiet in the firelight, not missing a word, heard the eyewitnesses stories of the great fights John Hill, his father's mother's kin, had fought to victory. These epics of fighting days were engraved on his memory more deeply than anything read from a printed page could be.

Stories of that John Bull McLendon still survive—his middle name was descriptive and not connected with his christening. He seems to have been a Samson without enough Philistines to conquer and in that way suggests Alexander the Great. He was a blacksmith of the hills who had a habit of twisting horseshoes apart with his hands. He amused admirers by lifting great weights with his teeth. At twenty-one, he had conquered all the bullies in the surrounding country and sighed for more antagonists worthy of his prowess.

On the Crosland place can still be seen the ragged remains of what was once the finest apple orchard in Marlboro county. The owner liked hard cider, and there it was made by the barrel. After the crops were laid by, the clan McLendon would come to visit Tom, and Baxter and his brother would hear the stories of the fights while lying under an apple tree or sitting under the big chinaberry tree shading the house. They were legendary epics of the clan, of battles to determine who was the best man. That of the fight in Tennessee was never more than oral legend, but that famous combat, talked of for many miles around for a long time by everybody, might have occurred something after this fashion:

Having whipped all contenders within his own sphere

Bull McLendon heard of another fighter over the mountains in Tennessee whose ability had become an interstate theme, and who may be called Hod Hoover here, because that was not his name.

Hod Hoover was the champion of champions when Bull McLendon decided to go to meet him on his own ground. None of those gladiators had ever heard of the Marquis of Queensberry and his rules for the fighting art. They fought fists and skulls, rough, roll and tumble, nothing barred. Bull McLendon found Hod Hoover displaying his prowess before a crowd at a political meeting sometime in the 1840's. Bull had a few friends with him. They saw a man apparently on the wrong side of forty stripped to the waist, not over five feet nine, but almost as broad across the shoulders as he was long. The muscles stood out in bunches and knots on his back and arms. The broad chest was matted with shaggy red hair, and the closely cropped hair on his small, bullet head was a coarse red sprinkled with gray. An undershot jaw like an English bulldog's, under a narrow, receding forehead, completed the rather repulsive picture of the man.

He toyed with two heavy cannon balls, twisted a horseshoe, and picked up a barrel of water by the chine and lifted it to the platform.

"John Bull McLendon can do that," somebody said. Hod scowled as he retorted:

"Let's see any man do it!"

John Bull rose slowly, pulled off his coat and stepped to the front. He towered a full head over Hoover and was equally as broad. Seizing the barrel of water, he toyed with it a moment and then lifted it at arms length above his head. The horseshoes he broke without apparent effort. Hod stared at him and growled angrily:

"How 'bout squeezing hands?"

Bull McLendon nodded, and the crowd became motionless as the two giants clashed hands with all their strength. McLendon had the advantage of the longer hand. For five minutes at least they stood thus looking each other in the eye. Great beads of sweat stood out on their foreheads, and their arm muscles stood out like cables. Suddenly, Bull McLendon threw all of his reserve strength into his muscles, and Hod weakened. A look of pain crept over his face and for the first time in his life he cried, "Whipped!" The crowd was wild with enthusiasm. Hod, scowling, roared out:

"I'll bet twenty dollars I kin throw you catch as catch can!"

"Good!" And with the word John Bull McLendon stripped off his shirt. The men ran together like two bulls. There were no rules nor referee. A man's shoulder and hip were supposed to touch the ground to constitute a fall, but Hod started to fight, instead of wrestle, the moment the two met. He caught McLendon quickly, tripped him up and began to choke him the minute they hit the ground. McLendon, surprised, was almost out bebefore he had begun, but he grasped the hand of Hoover, tore it from his throat and withstood the heavy blows until he could get his breath back. Then with a mighty heave he struggled up from the ground and threw Hod from him.

In a twinkling, Hod was on his feet again, and he rushed McLendon, who met the charge head down like a bull and butted Hod in the belly with the weight of two hundred fifty pounds behind the hard skull battering ram. Hod crumpled into a limber heap, and Bull McLendon stood over him a minute and then turned and coolly began to put on his shirt, merely remarking:

"Onct I butt 'em, they is done."

Years afterward, Bull McLendon's kin, the little Baxter McLendon heard such stories by the score, and they had a large part in molding his own character. He was never, perhaps, conscious of imitating his fighting kin purposely, but he was molded into shape by a number of forces, of which these stories he heard in childhood were one.

One sequel to them occurred at Clinton, North Carolina, when the boy who drank in the stories of the fighting kinfolk was holding a big revival there after he had become a man and a famous evangelist. There arrived in town a traveling show with a wrestler who offered fifty dollars to anybody who could throw him. The Reverend Baxter F. McLendon went down town between sermons and threw that challenger of all comers and collected the fifty dollars.

The effects of the tales of prowess told in the hearing of the boy were to be seen through the many years that he lived from the schoolhouse to the pulpit, after he had grown big enough to fight other men, not only with muscles, but with wits and brain. But, chiefly and more immediately they made him prouder than ever of his family and kin; they also by contrast made the boy more resentful than ever of his poverty and lack of opportunity for better things.

Men who have spent lifetimes studying the mechanism of the human mind are pretty well agreed that the prime factor in the equation of a grown man is the experiences of that person in childhood. Modern scientists specializing in psychology have learned that childhood experiences are of great importance in molding the destiny of the adult and the character of his journey across the narrow terrain we call life. They find in the sensitiveness of the little boy, Napoleon Bonaparte, to his slight physique and short stature the reasons for his imperious tyranny toward man-

kind in his later life—not for revenge for slights and hurts, but by a natural, inevitable reaction that always occurs in everybody. The childhood of Mussolini has been studied in great detail by his biographers who find there the reasons for his adult actions that startled the world and made him one of the most interesting men in history. This is not the place to enter upon a study of childhood complexes which retain their force into adult life and mold the individual; all men of analytical habits often find themselves explaining some marked peculiarity or characteristic by some other thing which may occur in their play, home life or other environment when they were little boys. It is generally the trait of most importance in the adult character that can be traced to influences that worked strongly upon the child.

Modern biography is accordingly much concerned with the facts of childhood since these contain the explanation of the principle facts in the adult constitution of character. This justifies recounting here the stories Baxter McLendon heard as he sat in the corner with the firelight from the fatwood pine knots playing over his interested features—stories of the best hounds in two states hunted by his grandfather and stories of the fighting prowess of his kin. It justifies still more the emphasis placed here upon that feeling he had in early childhood of being encompassed and hemmed in and subjugated by caste and poverty. Both these influences were large parts in the complex that molded the permanent character of the man, and they are discernible, sometimes one and sometimes the other most marked, in every era of his adult life.

Vaulting pride and soul carking rebellion against poverty began to work together on that boy when he was very young and plastic and susceptible to outside in-

fluences. They began to fashion his character so soon, and kept at it so long and continuously, that this became the thing of second rank importance in the making of the man—the one of prime importance being that fatalistic obsession that lasted for thirteen years until it was fulfilled.

That intense pride plus that sense of being on an inferior plane recurs again and again from boyhood to manhood as the mainspring of his actions—the key to paradoxes—the motive force impelling him to deeds glorious and discreditable, wise and foolish, and finally lifting him to sit with the most exclusive men of affairs who are the present day giants of his native state.

He was charged with belligerency as a thunder cloud is charged with electricity. From a surcharged cloud a very small object on the ground may draw the lightning stroke that rends the earth. A very small event, a careless word, or a casual look, might start a thunderstorm in the soul of the boy, Baxter McLendon. And storms in the souls of small boys have tremendous results more often than some people opine.

This was the situation when Baxter became old enough to go to school. That meant association with more children—always with the conditions described above—with a very unstable chip balanced on his shoulder.

It was at his first school that he received the shock to his fine sensibilities that made very definite his years of belligerency against his fate, his poverty and his caste position—it is safe to say that his first day at school had more to do with his adult character and its developments than any other single incident in his life. It was the culmination of a tragedy in real life and an epitome of his experiences for many future years and in many different environments.

Going to school for the first time is a momentous event to all children. This child had inherited the urge toward learning, and this had been cultivated in even the little child by his parents and Grandfather Marshall Swan. He was, as always, very intense in his emotions, and everything that occurs in his life is a superlative to him; so that the announcement that he should start to school was to that child even more momentous than to ten thousand other children. He told the gladsome news to every negro boy on the plantation, and to everybody who came to the house or passed in the road, after the fashion of all children, but with an emphasis of expression and a swelling elation none of the grown-ups could understand—today, as he recounts it, his face and tone impart more of its superlative quality than mere words can express. At Sunday school he had a larger audience and told all the other children that he was going to school the next morning.

All the preceding week, his mother was busy sewing, to make him better clothes to wear to school; of course she sewed by hand with a needle, and all the material was homespun. She also knit new stockings from cotton yarn.

The trousers were of homespun colored brown with copperas and very stiff and reached just below the knee, leaving a hiatus of bare leg above the tops of the stockings, which were held by twine strings. The trousers themselves were supported by galluses made out of bed ticking with several button holes in the ends which were elongated to provide for the future growth of the boy and could be let out a hole at a time as he became taller. Also the trousers were ornamented with large glass buttons visible a long distance away. The sleeves of the homespun shirt were inches too long, to provide again economically for his growth before it should be worn out, and all its dimensions were too large with the same purpose. The coat of the same material was equally ill fitting and by some mistake in measurement its sleeves were too short. Topping all was a striking, little, red cone of a hat his father had bought at a store for the great occasion.

Shoes were the item of most importance, for the boy had never before owned a pair. When he was told that he was to have shoes to wear to school, little Baxter asked a thousand questions about them in the interval before the next Saturday afternoon when his father would go to town to buy them. When his father started to town behind Molly, a little red mule, in an old two wheel cart, he told Baxter to be a good boy until he came back—and Baxter spent the lagging hours standing out where he could see the road for the longest distance and praying that nothing would happen to delay his return. There he watched the sun slide down the western sky, and as it reached the trees on the horizon, he saw Mollie and the cart and his father appear in the road, and he sprinted as fast as his little legs could twinkle to meet—the new shoes. He says that as his father helped him up to the seat of

the cart, he thought him the prettiest man he had ever seen! But the inflexible father made him wait to see the shoes and a spelling book until they had unhitched and fed the mule.

Then he laid the package on the bed and opened it, disclosing a Webster's spelling book and—the shoes! They were wonderful shoes! Their brass toes shone with effulgent radiance! To a mere grown-up, they were coarse leather, heavy brogans designed to withstand long wear by an active boy. But to the little boy leaping over the floor, shouting to his mother to come see, gazing enraptured at the new shoes, they were foot covering fit for an archangel—and while the child did not analyse it then, their real importance was that they were the symbol of a new era in his life, an adornment meet for a boy going to school.

And the spelling book . . . . . Webster's blue back spelling book is but a legend now, and not many parents of present readers were born soon enough to have seen one. But in its day it was an institution, a shrine, a sacred symbol of education, and the first school book of many men who were to become immortal as history. It was the first book little Baxter McLendon owned, studied, or paid any attention to for its letterpress. He grabbed the book from the bed where it was laid and looked it through devoutly. When he could take his eyes off the new shoes, he gave his attention to the spelling book. Then he lay on the floor in front of the fireplace and investigated the blue back book from beginning to end.

In it the word "baker" was a milestone, he found, for his father told him that was as far as he himself had gotten in the book when he was a boy. The word "materiality" was made a more important marker and

goal, for the father said that when Baxter got to it, he would be almost educated—and mark the constant ambition in the parental mind as the father adds that he hoped the son would get clear over to "materiality"; and the determination to be educated in the son demonstrated by the fact the hope of his father impressed him strongly enough to be remembered to this day down to the detail of the word.

Until he was chased to bed that night, the boy studied the new book, full of curiosity about its contents. There were many questions arising in his mind about the cat in the meal with mice playing around her, at the top of one page. His mother found a text for some good advice in the picture of old dog Tray who got into trouble through bad associations. The boy up in the apple tree just discovered by the farmer standing on the ground turned out to be a criminal far beneath the attention of little Baxter McLendon. With its score of pictures and accompanying text, it was more than a spelling book; it was a volume de luxe, a mine of diamonds, a great adventure, to the little boy—and a sacrifice for his father to spare the money to buy it.

Brightened by the brass toed shoes and the spelling book, the interminable eons between Saturday night and Monday morning finally passed. Everybody in the McLendon family was up an hour earlier than usual—which made it very early indeed—because Son must get off to school. Even the ages necessarily devoted to breakfast were ended at last, and the mother brought out the clothes on which she had been toiling so hard for over a week, that her boy might be properly dressed among the school children he was to join at the private school Uncle John S. Moore kept in his large house in town. Before sun up a little tin bucket had been packed with corn bread, fried

bacon and a big sweet potato for the schoolboy's dinner.

At last all the preparations were complete, and the little boy started to school. His father and mother both followed him down the road a quarter of a mile telling him of their ambitions that he become a good man—and a well educated man—it seems that the parents of that boy were unceasing in instilling into him proper ambitions. He promised them that he would study hard, be a good boy at school, and work hard to become a big man. He meant it with all the fervor of his little heart beating so proudly in his new clothes and all the force of his young brain swelling after the new emancipation of the blue spelling book. And he was happy to the point of ecstacy—happy with the fulfillment of a long deferred desire to go to school— happy in possession of so marvelous a blue back book—happy in his new clothes in which he swaggered like a brigadier of militia covered with gold lace—happy in his love for so superlatively fine parents—happy because he was adventuring beyond the limitations of the home at the edge of the swamp into the big world and among the many people whom he had seen and passed often enough, but with whom he had never been associated before. And he was chiefly happy because he was going among those people as an equal, as one of the many pupils in a school. He walked on air despising the ground beneath his feet as ignoble compared with the companionships he anticipated at school.

And in this state of exultation and elation at his good fortune, he walked into the private school in Bennettsville patronized by many of the families of the ultra aristocratic society of that time and place. He carried his homespun, homemade, ill fitting, rustic clothes into a room full of boys with store clothes, shining buttoned shoes, smooth black hose, dainty neckties and checked

caps, who brought their luncheons in handsome baskets.

Within the next hour, the permanent trend of his characteristics was irrevocably fixed. There is much reference in this biography to his constant strife against caste and poverty, because that is the truss carrying the stresses of all the rest of the structure. There is elsewhere a reference to the fact that the achievements and individuality of every man may be traced back to some shock or continued strong impression felt by a young boy. When this boy, Baxter McLendon, stepped into that school room that morning, he stepped into the mold that was to shape him into permanent form. The genesis of the real Baxter McLendon is in that first day at school.

Walking in out of the sunlight of joy in his new clothes, his first glance inside stunned him. There was a sharp pain in his inexperienced little heart. There is no pain equal to the shame felt by a boy in a den of his more fortunate fellows. The pain in sensitive little Baxter was like that in the heart which shuts off the breath. It was really stifling. Forty years later he remembers that: "I was almost stifled to death with shame." His use of precisely the proper verb after so many years proves the intensity of his feeling when he entered that school room.

And as the last straw of the load on his little heart, in addition to the clothes and the lunch baskets, he was at once told that they did not use Webster's blue back speller, but one of later vintage.

The symptomatic effects were immediate. The little boy staid in his seat when the other children went out to play at recess, and he did not leave the school room during the noon hour. A quarter of an hour before time for school to close, little Baxter would ask permission to go home, and thus avoid contact with the other children outside. He carefully kept away from all the other child-

ren, because, he says: "I was ashamed, chagrined and humiliated, and I didn't want anything to do with any of them."

It is useless to remark that he did not give the other children a chance to be polite to him. Anybody who knows boys of that age knows what those other boys would have said and done to rustic Baxter on the playground, if he had given them an opportunity.

Baxter McLendon had two or three years under the tutelage of Uncle John S. Moore and his wife, Aunt Laura. During all that time the boy told the teachers their pedagogy was wrong, and Aunt Laura told the boy that his skull was as thick as a goat's, and that there was something to do at school besides speak pieces on Friday. After a short time with Miss Mollie Odom as a teacher in another school, and another period under R. L. Freeman, a teacher who says the biggest thing he saw in Baxter was stubbornness and determination to do things his own way, the boy obtained some real schooling.

The second school he attended was a typical one for the time and place. A frame church and even smaller school house stood side by side and were called Ebenezer. They were on the edge of a densely wooded swamp extending for half a dozen miles across the level country in three directions, with a road and an expanse of plantations on the other side. The forest embraced the school house and church with thick undergrowth under the pine trees.

The old church and school house have been replaced with somewhat better ones now, but the tree is still standing there beside them under which Baxter McLendon gave another boy a good trouncing and displayed an illuminating trait of character at an early age. The other boy had hit Baxter's brother Murray, and Baxter fought him

and whipped him until he promised to let Murray alone. When the schoolboy fight reached the forum of the teacher, the latter required apologies and repentance and promises not to fight any more.

The other boy told the teacher he was sorry, but Baxter refused to commit himself. He said he was glad he whipped Tobe and would do it over again, if Tobe hit Murray again. So, in the interest of discipline, the teacher whipped Baxter formally and thoroughly, but without forcing the boy to express sorrow for that fight under the tree.

"If I'd lied like Tobe did, I'd have got off too," Baxter said to himself on a log in the swamp woods where he went to commune with himself over the injustice of school teachers. That sentence was the crux of the indignation and stubbornness that surged through him. But there was not the slightest idea of saving himself by lying out of anything in the future. The punishment by the teacher had only made stronger a trait in the boy that was permanent and to be seen very often in his later life. That indignation on a log in the swamp was one of the causes of childhood which mold men into what they become in manhood.

His father moved down below Blenheim, not too far from Parnassus, which was a combination of church and adjacent school. The master of the school was F. A. Rogers, a cultured aristocrat and a strict disciplinarian. Every day Baxter and the teacher had combats, the boy insisting that the pedagogic methods of the schoolman were all wrong, and the schoolmaster complaining of poorly learned lessons. When F. A. Rogers quit, Mrs. Bella Rogers became the principal of the school, with her daughters, Miss Mary Etta Rogers and the present Mrs. Nora John for teachers. The school was supported partly by

state money and partly by subscriptions from the surrounding gentry.

"I planned by day and dreamed by night how to make life miserable for them; about the only studying I did was history and memorizing a speech for Friday afternoon," is Baxter McLendon's quite accurate summary of his activities during his first attendance at Parnassus school.

There was that constant chip on the boy's shoulder; there was a youthful idea, shared by some adults everywhere that education is memorising facts; there was a keen desire to be noticed and praised which was a result of the chagrin and humiliation he so often mentions when referring to his boyhood; and there was that resulting ambition to be a leader—if he had become a musician, he would have played solo only, or conducted the orchestra, for even tooting the biggest brass horn would not have satisfied him. It will be noticed that he was in error in only the first two of these things, and emphatically right in the last two. Once his teacher, Miss Nora Rogers, later Mrs. John, sensed this when she said to the boy:

"Baxter, you certainly are a limelight artist; if you can lead, you'll always shine."

Already he was shining in memory studies. Only Mrs. Bella Rogers of all the teachers he ever had understood how to develop him, and she utilized his inate forces. When visitors came to the school, she would ask Baxter to tell the answer to an arithmetic problem he had worked a week before, or have him stand up and glibly recite of some battle or other historical event with all the dates and other stumbling blocks flowing out in the torrent of detail. This was joyous school work for that boy, lessened his feeling of inferiority with its belligerency, made him love that teacher and like himself better. But withal he enjoyed most the oldtime Friday afternoon exercises

which were entertainments by and for the school to which fond parents and other visitors sometimes came.

The girls and more sedate boys generally read essays, but the chief things on the programs were declamations —all of the rousing, gymnastic type favored by the elocution of that era, like the speech of Spartacus to the gladiators, or some remarks of Cicero on Cataline. One Friday afternoon Baxter recited Curfew Shall Not Ring Tonight, but not so well as to satisfy himself. There is a suggestion of his future in the facts that his rendition that day did not satisfy himself, and that he studied hard all the following week to attain perfection in that same declamation. Also there is a sidelight on his traits as a fifteen year old boy in the further fact that he invited all the neighbors to come the next Friday afternoon and hear him do the piece right. They came, which illustrates still another phase in him, that continual interest of good people in him from young boyhood to the present day. And Baxter was fully prepared that second afternoon to picture the girl swinging from the bell clapper as she should be shown and to utter her courageous sentences with all the force they deserved. And at the last minute he was informed that he could not repeat a declamation given previously.

He rose to the occasion magnificently. The mind of the boy worked so rapidly and so ingeniously toward a perfect retort to the circumstances as to suggest that it belonged to a lawyer or diplomat. Already upon his feet, the only alternative to sink back into his seat disgraced in his own eyes, he walked with great dignity to the platform and in his deepest, most sonorous voice slowly orated:

*I had a little dog, and his name was fox;*
*I sent him across the river to get my box;*
*He got my box and spilled my snuff—*
*I think my speech is long enough.*

As entertainment for the school and visitors that was quite as good as any recitation could be.

It is perfectly apparent that there was constant open warfare between the boy and his teachers. They refused to adopt his ideas in pedagogy—some of which were better than theirs and others of which were the usual childish arguments to be allowed to do as the child pleases—and he valiantly fought his part of the warfare. He carried his contumacy to the extent of deliberately failing in his lessons, because the teachers seemed pleased at a good recitation in class. Many a night he took his books home and by hard study learned his lessons perfectly—and next day pretended to be densely ignorant on them. He was not carrying his fight on the world and the teachers to the extent of injuring himself, and he even then realized fully the value of education and of learning lessons.

The Parnassus school would be classified as a high school now, and was what former generations called an academy. Its curriculum included Caesar, French and mathematics through geometry. The boy Baxter dug his way into these studies, and Miss Mary Etta Rogers remembers him in her Latin class and his great aversion to that study. Mrs. Bella Rogers now says that Baxter was about the average boy in morals, but extraordinary in originality and intellect. She admits her memory may be modified by the loving appreciation she soon formed for his character. The advent of Mrs. Bella Rogers into his sphere of action was one of the most important events in the life of Baxter F. McLendon. And his young life at that time was a pretty strenuous one.

In addition to pretending not to know his lessons, extemporized burlesque that really was satire on Friday afternoon, and constant turmoil with his teachers, he was accustomed to fight every boy on the school grounds on

the slightest provocation and to make a casus belli if none existed before; he found ways to secretly heat the handle end of the poker used to open the stove door; placing bent pins for other children to sit upon had become a fine art with him; he was ingenious in inventing devilment that really harmed the school as a school—he was a Napoleon in his warfare on everybody and everything pertaining to the caste system he was fighting as Hercules fought the dragons and everything.

Going down the road to old Parnassus one morning, young Baxter looked back and saw coming toward him the new principal, Mrs. Bella Rogers, and her two daughters in a buggy drawn by a little, stiff legged, sharp eared mule. When they turned a corner they were near enough to hear Miss Nora's candid and confidential remark to her mother and sister:

"There's that mean Baxter McLendon! I wish he'd stayed at home!"

"Old girl, I'll give you a nice time this year!" was Baxter's retort muttered to himself. That interchange of expression, each unheard by the other, was a very correct portrayal of the conditions and relations between the boy and the school up to that time. Mrs. Bella Rogers had the insight and sound knowledge to change it.

Baxter continued his pranks and his fighting. But for a whole month he was not chided, nor an impatient or unkind word said to him. Then came a burst of radiant sunlight, when one day Mrs. Bella Rogers called him to her and said to him:

"Baxter, I've been hearing that you are a mighty bad boy, and I've been hearing wrong. You're a good boy, and you couldn't be mean if you wanted to—and you're going to make a good man. We are going to get along together fine, because I certainly like you."

It was the second time anybody outside his home had ever said a kind word to the boy and the first note of any appreciation of him in the discords that raged in his soul, and in his environment. The reaction in him was quick and strong. He threw back his shoulders, lifted his head high, and replied without deserting his own guns so long trained against the caste system:

"Mrs. Rogers, these teachers have been partial and trying to mistreat us poor children, and I won't stand for it!"

"I know you won't, Baxter, and I don't blame you," the wise Mrs. Rogers replied; "I know the boys who are teasing you, and they're not going to do it any more around me. I know we're going to get along fine. You have a good head, and it's not any trouble for you to learn anything you want to learn. There's plenty of good in you, Baxter, if you'll only give it a chance."

For once, Baxter agreed with a teacher—because for once a teacher understood him—and to be understood had been for so long the intense craving of his starved soul. The light that shone in the road upon Saul, afterward called Paul, was not more potential than that encouragement given the boy who from his first thoughts had felt fettered immovably in the web of caste and poverty and hopeless, helpless, had had his whole being charged with antagonism.

He hurried back to his desk, grabbed a book, and from that hour tried his very best to please that discerning teacher. He kept away from the playground, staying in at recess and at noon often, to avoid the temptation—or necessity—to break the peace to uphold his rights. His heart swelled more and more as he reflected upon her goodness, and it was filled with love for her. At the acme of life and success, he says she is responsible for most of his education, and in this he is eminently correct.

"She was the only teacher I ever went to that understood me; I looked upon all the rest as sworn enemies," he testifies now.

For once and for the first time, the boy had found somebody who understood him, his longings, his aspirations, his pride, his antagonisms, his heartaches, his pleasures, his hates, and the other emotions swelling in a youngster too young to reason straight, but capable of deep feeling. It was she who first looked with understanding into a boy of the kind who often develops into an arch-criminal, and it was she who nurtured the germ of good there which was to be such a great force for righteousness in after years, after many windings and turnings and reverses on the way. When talking many years later about this incident and their relations as teacher and pupil, Mrs. Rogers said:

"We loved each other, and that smoothed out everything else."

Far down the western slope of life as this is written, Mrs. Bella Rogers is a bright, cordial woman of charm and polished refinement, living in a southern country home of which she is the queen dowager. She retains the sweetness and light of her earlier years, and indeed these are permanently impressed in her face and voice. Her conversation proves that there has been no loss of that shrewdness she showed in her correct estimate of the misunderstood little Baxter McLendon a third of a century earlier, and her casual remarks sometimes are illuminated by that keen insight used to such good result when both she and the boy were very much younger. She has much to her credit in the record book of life kept above, but when one considers all that has come out of her influence over, and work with, Baxter F. McLendon, one must believe that the record she herself made while principal of Old Parnas-

sus school is written in gold and insures her the great reward commensurate with the great good she did on earth.

She has one memory of that boy which persists throughout the decades since above everything else. It is of his tender care for his younger sister, now Mrs. Mary Pond. On the western horizon of a full life, she treasures as one of her sweetest recollections the tenderness and constancy of Baxter McLendon toward his little sister. When asked for episodes in the school life of the man, she constantly recurs to the love and care of the boy for his sister. It was one manifestation of the characteristic, born in the baby, of love for the family; it was one of the first expressions of that love.

As things were then, when schooling was everywhere subservient to work, and especially in that home where work was necessary to living, there was scant time to go to school. Baxter started in the late autumn, after the plantation work was finished and there was nothing more for him to do at home; he quit school in the early spring when the first buds on the trees warned the workers that it was time to prepare for another crop. Other children who did not need to work attended the school at Parnassus from the beginning to the end of the term.

It was when he saw them going past his home place that he had a relapse into the proud depression that colored his life then so much that he was never entirely to escape from the effects it produced.

While he was filling the guano distributor for the negroes in the field, or was watching the crows who threatened the corn, he saw other more fortunate children passing along the road. It exasperated him almost beyond endurance—they were getting easily what he desired so much and could not obtain; he was like a prisoner behind a guard line and perishing from thirst while a brook

of rippling water ran just beyond the deadline. The dead line was his poverty, he felt. And as that prisoner would always be thinking of springing upon his guard and disarming him, the boy was constantly brooding with rage in his heart. Pride and rage make a bad mixture, especially in a boy. Bitterness submerged this boy during those years. It enthralled him and kept him bound within itself. It made an impress never effaced.

"The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," a poet philosopher once said. In a marvelous percentage of cases these thoughts of the youth guide his life and actions even unto death at three score and ten years. The thoughts of a boy are long, long thoughts, because their potentialities last for long, long years.

The boy on the plantation called Baxter McLendon had thoughts extending far—not only into the future, but deep into the essence of things. His long, long thoughts in boyhood have been realised in his political fights for better sociological conditions as well as for a better christianity —are realised in the man himself as he is in maturity. They were painful thoughts then, wounding thoughts that left scars, but the scars visible now are like those carried as a badge of honor by the victorious soldier.

He smuggled books into the fields. Behind his protecting stump, he read—read like a starving man eats. He devoured there in the field Irving's Life of Washington, the volumes of Gibbon's Rome and other books—and once he walked five miles to borrow a copy of the life of Jesse James! He was not a pedant, but a real boy full of determination to escape the bondage he felt so much; not a boy with the ambition of a Lincoln, but a boy trying to work his way upward out of a slough that he felt threatened to engulf him.

Notwithstanding such books as the biography of the

train robber, he seems to have read usually for learning and not for entertainment when a boy. Borrowing books necessitated remembering, and he developed a remarkable memory retained to this day. In later years he wrote what he desired to remember precisely, and it seems true that what he writes he never forgets.

Even as a boy attending school more or less, the persistency shown in his studying behind a stump, while resenting the conditions that compelled it, was but the echo of what can in truth be called only stubbornness. The demonstration of pride as independence and the emphasing of the equality he was so far from feeling occurred every once in awhile. There was that early incident of the apples on seven trees.

The teacher in the routine of arithmetic propounded the problem: if there are seven trees with seven apples on each tree, how many apples are there?

"Forty-nine" responded the boy.

"Forty-nine what?" prompted the teacher.

"I won't tell you!" and obstinate antagonism was in the tone and in every line of the boy's face—that same antagonism born of the union of pride and poverty.

The teacher had the old fashioned ideas of training boys by discipline expressed in whippings. It seemed to the teacher imperative to make the boy say the word "apples." He proceeded to that end with a service of supply to replenish his armament of peach sprouts. With some short intervals of rest—rest for the teacher, not the boy—the teacher whipped little Baxter all the rest of that day, and when the teacher was worn out, the forty-nine still hung on the seven trees destitute of the designation "apples."

Somewhat curiously, and certainly symptomatically, when the boy grown into a man told that story forty

years afterward, he told it all vividly without once using the word "apples," after stating the question—and after forty years some cunningly devised questions failed to inveigle the mature man into saying "apples" while reminiscently recounting the incident.

A boy and a man like that is pretty apt to accomplish what he undertakes to do or not do.

Notwithstanding his industry, persistency and resentful efforts to pull himself out of the slough of his caste by his bootstraps—and perhaps actually because of the manifestations of pride and resentment, the boy soon had a reputation in the community that was discussed more or less by his elders. They said he was flighty and irresponsibly reckless, which was nearly true; that he had no sense, which was not true at all; that he had eruptions of activity from unrestrained impulses, which was a correct diagnosis, and that he was never mean, which was the basic, precise truth. In sober fact, boy and man, Baxter McLendon was never in the least vicious, even when he was shooting down men and running a gambling joint with bootlegging as an avocation. His mentality impressed his elders from boyhood days to the time of his more mature years and work.

The boy got comparatively little education in the school. The man is a shining example of the truth of the remark of Gibbon. "Every man who arises above the common level has received two educations; the first from his teachers; the second and more important from himself."

But, hungering for an education, Baxter McLendon seems to have obtained all the schooling he could manage to get. At the high school age, he went to business college and was graduated in due course with highest honors and previously unequalled marks. This ended his school work until after he had responded to the call to preach. The remarkable story of how he became able to take a business college course, and the troubles he had to maintain himself in Asbury college years later belong elsewhere in the study of a man. The present chapter in his life has to do with his reactions to schooling itself and the pedagogy to which he was subjected. He ran true to form through two church schools.

With full appreciation of his capacity for leadership, as well as his brain power, the christian people of Bennettsville at once after his conversion began to plan to utilize that new asset of the cause and of the church. A fund for his education as a preacher was quickly and easily raised, the subscriptions to it ranging from one dollar to as high as fifty and even a hundred dollars each by those who had known him longest and best, through the most sordid years of his life.

They first sent the convert to Asbury college, a Methodist school devoted chiefly to training missionaries and other church workers, at Wilmore, Kentucky. Here he spent the greater part of two years, studying Bible and history as majors and making the highest grade in his class in ancient history. He was then twenty-eight years old, and the intervening many years of varied and picturesque experiences since boyhood had caused no change

in his attitude toward the methods of teaching and the educational mill into which he was thrown.

We find him still insisting as strenuously as ever that his teachers did not know how to teach—and having access to competent evidence of this era, we are able to discover certainly, what we must also believe about his first teachers, that the student was right and the teachers were wrong at least half the time. Specifications of events furnish much light upon his dissatisfaction with the pedagogy he found at Asbury college. One concerns the amount of interest due on a promissory note.

In business college, the student had learned thoroughly how to ascertain such things by the shortest possible route, without necessarily any comprehension of the reasons for the process. The first clash at Asbury college was in the mathematics class room when the professor told Baxter to go to the blackboard and calculate the interest on $120 for sixty days at six percent. Baxter instantly said he already had it worked out and that the interest was $1.20. But he could give no explanation of the process, nor reason it out, except that he had learned in business college many years before that to find interest for sixty days at six percent one simply moved the decimal point over two places. The teacher insisted that the student learn the reasoning involved in the problem, and Baxter could not and would not do that, because his method gave the correct answer and that was the objective of the operation, he maintained. In this case the teacher was right and the student was wrong, it happens, and the same basic trouble occurred with the professor of mathematics as long as Baxter was in his classes.

In another continuous clash with his professors, Baxter was correct and they were entirely at fault. He reveled in the study of history, and whatever the topic of

the day in the class room, he read it thoroughly in all the historical works he could find in the library. As one result, in recitation he was constantly stating facts not to be found in the single textbook the department was using. The professor of history insisted that Baxter confine his study to the one book recommended, and Baxter refused to do this. Hence constant discord.

Any eighth grade pupil in a public school of today knows that professor of history was in the wrong in this case. Each and all of that faculty had cast iron methods insisted upon to the most minute detail, to impose upon all the students alike. Baxter McLendon was emphatically and precisely the kind of young man who would not submit to such narrow ideas—and unfortunately there was no such executive head as Mrs. Bella Rogers to remedy the conditions.

Of course in such a collegiate atmosphere there could be not the least adaptation of methods of study to the individuality of the student; modern ideas that the student should study in the way that will yield most to himself were unthought of there. Baxter McLendon was not then, nor ever since, the least analytical in his tendencies. There were other continual clashes about Bible study. The prescribed method was the construction of complex syllibi, with divisions divided into subdivisions and subdivisions dissected into smaller parts and so on down ad infinitum, as small fleas have smaller fleas to bite 'em. McLendon wanted to take one topic and memorize every reference in the Bible to that subject, compare and correlate them all and thus arrive at a conclusion and symposium on a divine dogma.

It was the same old conflict between pupil and teacher, with the pupil making no bones about telling the teacher how erroneous were the methods in use, and the teachers

holding up their hands in holy horror—some with grief and some with indignation—at his impudence and incorrigibility. And although he was in the right at least half the time, he modestly looks upon this phase of things as merely the inevitable result of his being different from some other people, saying now:

"I was constantly at odds with the teachers; I was forever making short cuts in studies."

There was more or less of the same lack of understanding at Moody Institute where he spent the greater part of another two years.

There is evidence that at Moody Institute he found some of his studies irksome. There he acquired some knowledge of the technic of preaching in a conventional manner—not to be used, however, when he won success by preaching in his own way—and perhaps he gained there some vision of the immensity of the field of human knowledge in general and of the necessity of the preacher possessing great breadth of view as well as intensity of zeal, wide information of things as well as familiarity with the Bible. It was after, and perhaps because of, his student days at Moody Institute, that the thorough education of the man began in earnest.

While all his schooling lacked the system that is the very essence of real education, an inventory of it discloses that he had the Parnassus school and the business college as a substitute for high school, and then he had four years in colleges where he took some work that should have been postgraduate. In all these schools, the record shows that he studied hard the things he liked to study. But it is not in the schools he attended that we must look to find where he was educated thoroughly —for while still in his forties, this man has attained to a real usable, quasi-scholarly education.

Its quintessence is reading, especially the reading of books, for he does not read very much of the ephemeral literature in newspapers and the modern magazines.

He has a library in the sense of a collection of books, but not a room to contain them. His library is scattered all over the place in his home, and is as mobile as the sandbars in the Missouri river. On one particular day, the visitor to his home in Bennettsville found this status: the large upper hall lined on one side for many feet with shelving reaching to the high ceiling filled with books; against the opposite wall a large table piled full of books in all positions, and a little farther along a cedar chest with books tumbled upon it a foot high in remarkable confusion; stepping over a pile of books on the floor one faced a large stand with books atop it and under it. From that side of the hall two rooms opened, one a bed room with an office desk, and the other occupied by the keeper of the fox hounds. This latter factotum slept in a literary atmosphere, for one entire wall of his bedroom was filled with shelving holding books conventionally and also piled flat under and on top the upright ones, with a lot of scrap books adding to the literary litter; a pile of books on the mantel and some scattered on the floor completed the book census there. In the other bedroom a welter of books; the dresser was piled so high with books that in its mirror one could see only his face above them, nor could one detect the least system in the piling of the books; crowding the typist on his left were two dictionaries just received and bought because new editions, and on his right a half dozen books of assorted subjects; on the washstand were some more books mixed with the things usually found on washstands, on top the wardrobe were a job lot of books, the mantel held a few, and two lay on the bed. Downstairs, by some chance,

perhaps because it was the special domain of the wife and home maker, only one room contained books, and they were all in two stacks of sectional bookcases against two walls and filling the only wall space long enough to contain them. With all that scattered confusion of books, the owner could find any one needed volume within a few minutes; but every set of books had the volumes in an order mixed up as to number so that volume eleven was apt to be in the first place and volume one about two-thirds down the line; there is not the least semblance of order in the library of this preacher.

Its quality is equal to its disorder. So uniformly are its books all worth while, that one feels that a volume of Marie Corelli on one big shelf must have arrived there quite accidentally. The only phase that equals its disorder is its variety—hardly a single topic within human knowledge but is treated in that library. The plurality of volumes have theological titles and seem to run the gamut of discussion in that more or less argumentative field; but it is far from being a purely theological library.

What this evangelist reads most in the later era of his life work is biography—the kind of biography that contains the realities of history. He is an exception to one rule, that men who do big things are familiar with the life of Napoleon—Napoleon is not in evidence as are Andrew Jackson, Voltaire, Benjamin Franklin, Aaron Burr, Phineas T. Barnum, Alexander Hamilton, Lorenzo Dow, Woodrow Wilson, John Wesley, Abraham Lincoln, Charles Darwin, Robert E. Lee, Walter H. Page, Benedict Arnold and some of the still living statesmen seen in the Mirrors of Washington, to list a few names out of the big catalogue of the biographical works he has read and to be found somewhere in his collection of books. Most of this biography is Americana. Almost without

exception it illumines a section of American history and especially the history of government in the United States.

For he has studied government of a republic perhaps more deeply and broadly than anything else. Certainly he is one of the best educated of men in the intricacies of government in this republic of ours, national, state and municipal, but especially federal. The reason is his intense, patriotic, philanthropic interest in good government. Its outlet is communications to the newspapers of his own state, and he has written some that rank with the best of state papers. Incidentally, the study of the activities of the statesmen who have molded governmental tendencies in this country, as told in biography, is a very good school of practical, efficient politics; but the work of Baxter F. McLendon by efficient political methods for good government, and his position in the unique and interesting politics of his native state, is another story to be told elsewhere and only to be mentioned here as made possible by his self education.

There is little science in his library, and what there is seems to be for the reading of his children, rather than for his own information. His books are his tools, albeit scattered around like those of an energetic, though careless, workman, a mechanic rather than a machinist, and he has found by experience the kind of tools he needs most in his hard, earnest, continual, zealous fight for an education denied him by the more usual method of the schools.

However tangential his choice of books to read may seem to another man of different bringing up, his method is the best way for him, judged by the only gauge worth while, the results.

A good deal depends on his method of reading, for he knows nothing of casual reading, and to him reading is

studying thoroughly. He says: "If you read a book and don't intend to know it, you'd better not read it."

To make certain that he has absorbed a book, he adopts the method of some school teachers with children—writing a synopsis of it, although he does not design a synopsis so much as a record of its salient facts. He writes this on the inside covers and fly leaves of the book itself in his beautiful, very legible, condensed chirography; it generally fills all the white paper placed in the volume by the binder. It cites the page of every item of it and is condensed into notes of the fewest possible words. One may read those fly leaves and talk as well about the book as though he had read it—but to make the entries on the fly leaves, one must actually know the book as he does the multiplication table. Having read and annotated a book in his own peculiar way, Baxter McLendon has really absorbed it.

And he retains it. His education has been aided greatly —perhaps made possible—by his remarkable memory, especially eye memory, the memory of things seen, or perceived through the eye. Having studied a book enough to be able to brief its details as well as its generalities on its fly leaves, and being able to remember always what he has read and digested there, must in time fill his brain pretty full of more or less correlated education, and he tries hard to correlate everything he learns.

Determination, plus reading selected books in large number, plus a method of masticating them on fly leaves and digesting them in the mind, plus ability to retain all the mental nutriment ingested, equals the self education of Baxter F. McLendon. Underlying it all is the determination to get an education, after being denied schooling. When he entered the pulpit, he was as uncouth educationally as a tramp is sartorially, but he said once of that time:

"I wasn't going to let a little thing like an education stand between me and my preaching"—and he proceeded to get an excellent education which is still enlarging and deepening and growing more useful every day.

There is another thing on which he has spent much time and energy which he thinks is education, but which of course is not that any more than shirt studs and shoe polish are clothing, or than face powder and lip stick are muscle. The books his family find most in evidence are his word books.

These are loose leaf blank books, already several in number, in which he writes with the care of his oldtime bookkeeping days each and every word he finds in his reading which is new to him. With each word is its definition stated with meticulous precision of shade of meaning in differentiation from near-synonyms. The whole collection is a sort of home made dictionary of the words he has met before he had a speaking acquaintance with them. It is his introduction to them and his first employment of them, and thereafter they are his servants.

These word blank books of his are striking—almost pathetic—indications of the extent to which the man goes in toiling to obtain knowledge and attain more facility and utility in his life work. They involve an immense amount of work, especially in ratio to the value of the manufactured article, and in this respect of disregard of measuring energy when something is to be done they are very typical of the man in all his various phases. Also, they somewhat increase his vocabulary which is already large enough in all good conscience; they have added much to the accuracy with which he uses words in his sermons and writings, a virtue not altogether universal among those who use the English language to accomplish their life work.

Thus far in the study of a complex character, it has been possible to trace back to its origin—in ancestry or surroundings—each of the traits of the man and compare the values of the influences impinging on the boy to mold a great evangelist.

But when we come to little Baxter's fourteenth year, we find that analysis is baffled, psychology is uncertain, and science bows to the unknown. Then occured the most powerful, the most mysterious and the most persistently constant influence upon his career in an episode of one sentence of thirty-three words—but words that turned out to be among the most potent ever uttered by human lips.

One Saturday afternoon, in the home a dozen miles out in the sticks, Thomas McLendon remarked that a great man was going to preach in Bennettsville the next day and asked his son whether the boy would like to go to hear the sermon. Baxter eagerly jumped at the opportunity—to go to town was a red letter event in his life, and even then he liked to hear oratory in the pulpit or elsewhere. Whether the discourse was a sermon or a political speech was of little moment to the boy, and going to town with or without hearing a speech was always a joyous prospect. So, to the suggestion of his father the boy answered: "Fine!"

Sunday morning, they hitched a mule in a buggy and drove the long road to Bennettsville. It was a long drive and the pair arrived after the services had begun in the tent erected by a revivalist who happened along—or was sent there in pursuance of a great design to sow a little seed that was to grow and finally come to the fruition of a hundred thousand converts to christianity.

The preacher who that day was to light a torch which should be carried over much of America after smouldering for a dozen years was the Rev. Dr. Beverly Carradine. He was even then a noted preacher in the region where some of the greatest sermons of the American pulpit were sometimes preached in little churches and to small congregations of country folk. He wrote many books on the christian life, as well as preached hundreds of sermons; and in the library of the Rev. Baxter McLendon, now another noted preacher, of another congregation, are all those books. Baxter McLendon was a small boy then, and what was to occur in that meeting and grow out of the words that day of that preacher was abundant reason for the man the boy was to become to collect and cherish everything possible connected with Beverly Carradine.

That preacher's mobile, expressive face with its bright gleaming eyes are as plain in the mind's eye of the man the boy became as a picture he holds in his hand. One sentence of that preacher rang in the ears of the boy for many years without ceasing; it was to resound and echo on the plantation, in a poker room, in the deep swamps, in a coal mine, and wherever the errant boy wandered. It was a sentence perhaps thrown out from the pulpit on the spur of the moment, perhaps to give variety in a sermon addressed entirely to adults, but it had the effect of a rifle shot that starts an avalanche of snow down a mountain side which keeps on until it is lost to sight far away. That sentence which was to ring through a lifetime and become a prophecy was:

"You little boys back there—come down here to the front and give your hearts to God, and he will call some of you to preach, and the world will hear from you."

Details required by the modern laboratory psychologist of the circumstances of the impinging of that sentence

upon the brain of a boy—such details as position and brightness of lights, previous occurences and the like—are entirely lacking. We can only say that the emotions of the boy were in such unstable equilibrium, that the idea hurled at him created an emotional storm of great magnitude and intensity. We might say that tempest stirred him to the very fundamentals of his emotions and created an obsession. But such generalities are after all indefinite and far from sufficient explanation of what ensued. For the obsession was dormant, against constant effort to destroy it by will power, for thirteen years.

The boy of course felt the emotional storm that gripped him in that rough seat in the revivalist's tent. As the words struck him, seeming to be shot at him from the end of the pointing finger of the preacher on the platform, he tingled all over. His mind was in a daze, and the tent and its congregation faded out. He shivered, even as hot flashes ran here and there over his body. His stomach seemed in the grip of an icy giant. All that was around him became as nothing, and everything seemed concentrated in himself—the only thing in the cosmos was he—himself—the being they called Baxter.

All the universe was in his own ego, because he was expanding to fill the cosmos. He trembled at the new, wide, glorious prospect. His face was pale, because his mind was consuming so much energy that hardly enough was left to keep his heart pulsating.

The warped, repressed, hopeless, resentful, belligerent little boy trying almost helplessly to pull himself out of the quicksands of poverty and caste suddenly was shown a stairway reaching up to the very clouds, and all the clouds were rose color in a beautiful cerulean sky. "The world will hear from you!" From him! Instead of the freezing contempt from the cotton barons when they no-

LIBRARY
GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
WINONA LAKE, INDIANA

ticed him at all, he would have the aristocrats sitting at his feet, listening to his preaching, even as a few of them were in that tent around him now. Hitherto tightly enclosed in a rigid cocoon of tradition and arrogance wrapped around him by the conditions and conventions of his birthplace, his fierce and valorous struggling for release all in vain, he now saw plainly the time when a butterfly should emerge and soar into the sunlight to be admired by men. The means and the method had been pointed out. "He will call you to preach."

In his mature manhood, Baxter McLendon, in recounting what he remembers of that few minutes in that tent, furnishes evidence of the correctness of the above analysis—as far as it goes—by telling the first and most distinct phase of the emotional idea flooding him was: "He had laid his hand on me, a poor, illiterate child of a tenant farmer, and said....." That sense of belonging to an inferior caste, that resentment because it was so, recognised its salvation and translation into superiority by a call to preach the gospel.

But he himself, in his maturity of thought and manhood, has quite a different explanation of that cataclysm in his soul which there is no disposition here to quarrel, for nobody knows better than the scientist devoted to truth that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

He did not anaylse it all at the time, if he ever did. He accepted it as a fact. How much it was a fact to him we shall see a little later. The fact included the divine call of the Master to the vineyard. "God had telegraphed me from the Grand Central Station of the skies what my mission in life was to be," he said thirty years after. He connoted it with the other fact that the same God had made the planets and stars—but it is to be argued that he first

mentions the rainbow, symbol of hope, in his list of the things God made. Another time he compares the scene in the tent with the light from heaven that shone on Saul and changed the Roman into Paul, the preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

From this viewpoint, the episode of the revivalist in the tent making a rather parenthetical remark to some boys on a rear seat was simply and solely one of many instances of an omnipotent God reaching down His all powerful arm to accomplish things on earth. To the Calvinist, it was foreordained; to the Methodist, it was a special Providence; to the scientific christian it was the ruler of the universe accomplishing His great purpose by the operation of complicated laws he enacted in the beginning from which there is no escape. Discussion of such things is smothered by what we do certainly know of the effects of that incident in the life of Baxter McLendon and its persistency in its results despite strenuous efforts to destroy its influence.

To follow that call to preach, delivered by the mouth of a nearly forgotten revivalist in a tent in a town in South Carolina takes us through thirteen years, several states and some tragedy and melodrama before it was answered.

At first, the emotional storm persisted day and night in the boy. He walked and worked in a daze through the day and lay awake nights. Curiously, but in entire harmony with his nature, he fought the new fate disclosed to him. He had been fighting his fate so long that it was a habit he could not break suddenly—even though the fate he was fighting now was the deliverance for which he had fought in chains so long. Paradoxial, perhaps quixotic, but perfectly understandable.

The boy lost much sleep and did not eat much—sure signs to his father that he was ill. There was not a whit

more confidences between Baxter and Thomas McLendon than there is between any fourteen year old boy and his father, then or now, and Baxter contented himself with simply denying that he was sick. He walked the floor of his bedroom at night in agony of spirit, because he was fated to be a preacher. He went often, in the middle of the night, out under an old peach tree and there prayed God to annul the call to preach. It all makes us smile now, but it was real agony to that little boy, so selfcentered and so determined to have his own way against the whole world and just then even against God himself.

One night, Thomas McLendon heard Baxter walking the floor and with drowsy fears of colic, or toothache, or pneumonia, or a stone bruise gone into an abscess, he hastily lighted the lamp and went into the boy's room—to receive the surprise of his life. To the father's question, "Son, what's the matter with you?" the boy answered that from the minute that revivalist had pointed his finger and flung his words at the young head, he realized that God had called him to preach—and that he didn't want to preach. The father with his face light with joy flung his arms around the boy as he said:

"Son, I've prayed for years that you'd be a preacher, and if you'll yield, I'll work my hands off to educate you." But it was fourteen years before that father was to hear that son preach a sermon, and then after the services were ended tell his wife, "That was the poorest preach I ever heard."

"I am called to preach!"

That commanding, submerging, dominant, obsessing, persistent fact was with Baxter McLendon always, for thirteen years standing as a fact in his consciousness while he tried in every possible way to kill it, flank it, get rid of it in any way possible. Always he was fighting it, for he

knew none of the arts of persuasion and the only way he knew to conquer was to fight. But it would not down and bobbed up in the most surprising places and under the most amazing conditions.

In a coal mine once, a big rock fell and smashed the car he was pushing on a tramway—if it had fallen a second later, it would have crushed the young man; his first flash of thought was, that there was another proof that he was to preach before he died. Hiding in a swamp from a lynching party, he felt certain of his ultimate escape to substantiate that call to preach. In another coal mine, Angelo, a miner in the same shift, jerked him out of the path of a falling boulder, and the first flash of conscious thought in Baxter's head was, "I've been given another chance to obey that call to preach." When a rock fell from the roof of the mine, as he stooped, and missed his head barely enough to knock his cap and lamp between his feet, his mind flashed again, "I'm being saved to preach!"

Years later, when he had a barber shop as a disguise for a gambling room and bootleg joint, a wandering phrenologist came in one day and felt the heads of all the barbers for a quarter apiece, Baxter's the last one. The phrenologist bragged of his skill and record as evidence of his infallibility, and when he came to the skull of Baxter, he became enthusiastic. He insisted that Baxter ought to drop the razor and shears instantly and hie himself to a lawyer's office to study law, for he had the brain of a great jurist and had been designed specially to be a lawyer. Next day in the street, the phrenologist stopped Baxter to reiterate and emphasise his injunction that the barber begin the study of law at once. Baxter was impressed and believed in the man's sincerity and ability, but had

no thought of taking his advice. For to study law was useless, when a man had been called to preach!

Such incidents, and there were many more of them through the years of his youth and young manhood, are important as showing the hold that call to preach had upon his mind. Not only did the call sound when he thought about his future, but it was automatically trumpeted purely reflexly by association with every accidental exingency that makes the mind swing free from purposeful control.

His combat against the call persisted also. This was another manifestation of that strong trait, inborn and cultivated by his surroundings, he has to the degree that is generally called stubbornness. Combativeness and obstinacy, two of his strongest traits, were combined in his determination not to preach.

In this characteristic fight against his fate, even though that fate was deliverance from the other fate that soured his childhood, we have the explanation of the more sordid parts of his life, to be told later. It explains that oneriness that made him notorious in his young manhood in his home town, and the worse things that grew out of his reckless carelessness about his reputation then.

We may see the reason for his being the proprietor of a gambling room, skilled at all the tricks inherent in that occupation, and becoming a stench in the nostrils of good people—a very logical reason for all that, in his efforts to evade the call to preach. Certainly he placed himself as far away from any likeness to be a preacher as was possible in that era of his life, as will be understood when it is portrayed realistically later on.

There were many causes cooperating and intertwined for that murderous shooting which is to be pictured in this chronicle of a life, but behind and underlying them all

was that fighting against a call to preach now under consideration. As a call to get up on a cold morning to do the chores may cause a Minnesota boy to snuggle down deeper under the blankets and viciously kick the footboard, so the call to preach the gospel of peace and goodwill caused this South Carolina youth to cuddle down in iniquity, kick against the pricks, deal cold decks on occasion, shoot down a man after some difficulty in finding a pistol, and become the hare the hounds of Judge Lynch were chasing through the swamps.

The most notable thing about that call is its persistency through thirteen years of that kind of obstruction to its functioning.

A mere obsession would probably be removed by such treatment. A simpler delusion would have been worn away to inconsequential proportions by such a prolonged and intense resistance. Hysteria or suggestion would have disappeared soon under such will power.

One may range far and wide through the literature of biography without finding anything similar to this force in the life of Baxter F. McLendon. There are plenty of Napoleonic beliefs in the place in affairs and the work one is to achieve; but these selfcentered auguries are welcomed and often accomplished by the determination to fulfill them. Lorenzo Dow—who was a rather smug child and at four years old took his playthings and went home as soon as he found the neighbor boy never said his prayers—welcomed the call to preach as a very desirable program for his life. But this queer Baxter McLendon, boy and man, detested the schedule he was so certain was in store for him and contended with it as strenuously and cunningly as ever man fought for or against any cause—and not for days or months, but for thirteen long and very full years.

However fascinating may be the analysis of a human mind and the solving of a personal equation, this persistency of a dominant idea under the conditions of this case blocks scientific methods and foils all explanation—it compels one to leave it with him and his God after merely describing it.

Certainly it is the outstanding, dominating thing in his life. In the complexities of forces shaping this man, it is the one predominating power upon which all the rest depend. As in the truss supporting a bridge between piers there is one steel member in which all the stresses and strains are united, so in this life between two eternities all its storms and sunshine, energies and determinations, are supported by that call to preach.

There was that other ruling element—the resentful effort to rise against and above the conditions that surrounded his childhood—also powerful, it is true; the correlations and conflicts between these two forces are interesting rather than important, because the call to preach always kept the upper hand. It gripped him always; it expanded and shaped his destiny; it controlled his actions good and bad. It had results commensurate with the totality of a very remarkable, tremendously powerful, cataclysmal, volcanic personality—and from that forenoon hour in the revival tent, it was as much a part of him, and as reflex, as his appetite, sight, pulse beat, or breathing.

That call to preach is the keynote of his character, the dominant in the chord of his destiny.

No one man devised and formed the mechanism which starts with coal thrown through an iron door upon a grate and ends in a glass bulb making a room at midnight as bright as noonday; it required the minds of hundreds of men, each doing his own part, to accomplish the commonplace of the electric light.

Of course, they worked with elemental things—iron and copper from the earth, resins from the trees, great waves called electricity in the minute molecules, and motion in the still smaller atoms. These and other things upon which the minds of these many men exercised an influence to shape them to the end of the light in the world of the twentieth century are in the constitution of the earth and the universe God made and placed under physical and chemical laws.

So, no one thing makes a man. The elemental things in his makeup, the shaping of his character before his birth, the fundamentals that modify him in his plastic early life, as ore is made into iron engines and copper wires—such basic formative things, running back to the laws for the universal man enacted by God before the Garden of Eden, determine the classification of the man as a man.

But other men have much to do with devising the details of character, molding the angles and curves of his habitual motion, directing the waves of emotion which energise him largely, and creating beauty or ugliness of form and feature of those parts most in contact with others, by which he is loved or hated, admired or contemned, praised or blamed.

This man, Baxter McLendon, happens to have been

very susceptible to such influences from other persons and to have been molded by them in those phases of character that make personality in a very high degree. The figure of his boyhood was rounded out much by other people during the years of his young manhood.

The strongest superficial force acting upon his elementals—the greatest outside influence operating upon what he inherited from his ancestors and upon that resentment at his limitations, as an induction coil acts upon its core of iron or copper—has been friendship.

His friendships, and his own reactions to them, are what makes the man as he appears to the populace of his old home town where a prophet is generally without honor. In this case he is not entirely without honor, although he is not very well understood in his home community. It sees nothing of the preacher whom thousands flock to hear. It sees a man associating with a small group of intimate friends, most of whom fox hunt and follow active outdoor sports—the minority being a couple of lawyers. They are all old friends, and he stays with the few, instead of associating, as he could, with all the magnates and prominent citizens of that county seat town. His choice is due to the superlative friendliness toward his tried and true friends, and not to any dislike for other people. Some of his townspeople think they understand him and do not; others call him an enigma, because he is unusual, and do not try to understand his paradoxes; all have heard and read of his triumphs in his chosen work, and like all towns Bennettsville has a vicarious pride in his successes and likes to hear of them. Whenever it is known in advance that he will speak to the men's Sunday school class, or elsewhere, he always attracts an audience. The friendship between the evange-

list and his old home town is a very real one, and he values it, as he does all friendships.

To this man friendship is a fetish, practically a religion, only a little lower than piety in the scale of virtues. There is abundant evidence of this, and of its influence upon his life.

The first friend to whom he gave his unqualified friendship was his teacher, Mrs. Bella Rogers, with results that have been described in another chapter. He was a friendless boy, in the sense that he gave his friendship to no other boy, because of that dominant resentment at the conditions and people who surrounded him, and he felt enchained him. He lacks today those recollections of schoolboy friendship with his fellow pupils that are dear to the most of us. Somewhat later, he formed friendships with a vigor that seems like the sudden expansion of a suppressed longing.

This was in the era of selling enlargements of photographs; of the barber shop; of the poker table; of the most bitter era of his life—he had begun to feel, perhaps without knowing it, that he needed friends in his bitter fight against caste and poverty and the surrounding world in general, that fight that was never really to end.

The friendships he made then were of the Baxter McLendon sort, fathomlessly deep; everlasting; complete; limitless in every way. They survived a cataclysmal change of viewpoint of life; they lost nothing when close association stopped; they remained when pity for their objects replaced admiration; their call was as strong, when they needed help, after a score of years, as it was while the cards were flipping across the tables and the bottle of moonshine was being tilted.

Naturally, the friendships of that time had much influence upon his actions. Many people, with some pre-

science of what was really in the youth, considered the friendships he had to be the root of the evil that he exhibited. Certainly the friendships shaped his standards, at least in detail, and fed the fuel of their own fire.

While all this suggests the Indian, it was not the Indian characteristics that were in this young man. There was almost no hatred of his enemies, nor desire to balance accounts with the enemy as much as with his allies. There was, and is today, a rather curious absence of impulse to destroy as a concomitant to the desire to aid— of as much force directed against the enemy as is utilized to help friends. This is the more interesting, because it runs counter to his inheritance of the spirit of the Scottish clan and of Irish history. While all round him, then and now, natural alliances and oppositions of Scottish families were exhibiting the attenuated but real feelings originating centuries before, this scion of the clan McLendon could never conceive a feud, could not even adequately plan to administer punishment, should somebody "do him dirt."

The physical fights he had, even the shooting scrape, do not negative this. Borrowing a gun to shoot down an enemy was only the explosion of a temporary emotion, and in it there was really not the least of that permanent rancor that some of us feel toward those persons who have earned it from us. It connotes nothing of meanness, smallness, criminality, nor even oneriness, but only a lack of self control under pressure.

Next came, among others of lesser results, two preachers. To them is due the fact that this man is not a noted criminal of today, instead of a great evangelist converting his tens of thousands to the christian life. Their names are Bud Robinson and Will H. Huff. They did him invaluable good; he gives them unlimited friendship.

That, in him, is a superlative friendship, and as his own superlatives are entirely inadequate to express his obligation to them, by his own statement, let not this chronicler undertake to describe his friendship for them. At least they deserve his friendship more than some others of an earlier time.

With his conversion, and the joy felt over it in Bennettsville, there arose the people anxious to get the largest returns from that new asset or righteousness, who helped the cause by helping Baxter McLendon prepare to preach. By that act they attracted his friendship in high degree, and they are to be listed among those who had much to do with shaping this life we are studying into its permanent form.

The reformed Baxter McLendon naturally attracted the interest of men who previously had not cared to associate much with him. Then the young man felt the warmth of disinterested friendliness intent only upon helping him because he deserved it. There were a number of these.

He himself says among the chief of them was John L. McLaurin, statesman, congressman, United States senator, for years a power in the state—and withal a canny Scotchman who looks into people as other men peer into bodies with the Roentgen ray. Senator McLaurin not only had the desire to help the young man, but knew how to do it effectively, and his philanthropy and art is to be seen all over the Baxter McLendon of the present day, as one studies this evangelist.

Of another type, but of much importance in his friendliness, was Will Rowe, successful business man, much alive, observant, keen, and most of all full of hard common sense. Many times, and in many ways, the common sense of Mr. Rowe acted as a brake on Baxter McLendon's

impulsiveness, and the latter soon began to appreciate the value of such a sensible and loyal friend.

Both before and after the conversion of the bootlegging barber into the powerful preacher, there was Thomas I. Rogers, leading lawyer of that part of the state, whom Baxter assisted in politics and who helped him in every way possible, sometimes at considerable cost.

The men who have shown the most consistent and concrete interest in him in later years are nearly all men of large affairs and prominent in their own divergent fields. One was Colonel Ernest Chilson, the West Virginia coal magnate, who has been not one of the least. Others are several college presidents and professors who represent the intelligensia among his friends, as others represent wealth, statesmanship, politics, or the bar and judiciary.

There were others, of course — many others — who helped in the making of this complex human machine and won his friendship; a catalogue of them would fill pages. and they can not all even be named here; they all fill out the picture of friendship with a multitude of hands molding a man.

Now, this access of friendliness and friendship opened a window in the soul of the boy from the plantation. He saw the world through that window as something different from the one he had been seeing through the blue glasses of resentment and belligerency as a boy. It was a larger world, a brighter world, and it beckoned him.

Through that window of friendships he had his first glimpse of opportunity.

That is how friendship revolutionised his character. The hopeless, resentful, belligerent, fettered boy who knew no way to lift himself except to fight institutions and conditions, began to realise that his case was not hopeless; that instead of hating his circumstances, he

might better utilise some of them for his own good; that instead of fighting everybody to break down caste, he would better hurdle the obstacles between himself and his ambition; that he was bound only in his own despair and rancor, and his opportunity lay in his ability to work his way out of the low places to the hills where the sun shone, instead of rotting his heart out in the swamp.

Aside from any very great influences upon him of persons who became his friends, friendship as a principle was one of the most effective forces affecting the life and fortunes of this man grown from that dynamic, resentful boy.

The strongest, most beneficent external influence upon the character and life of Baxter McLendon is a woman.

She is not much changed by the years since she was a handsome black haired, black eyed, vivacious girl of fifteen when he first saw her, at the home of a neighbor to her parents at Wadesboro, North Carolina. The young man was keeping books in Florida, but for two years courted Miss Rena Ratcliffe with all his might. Her parents did not learn much about either the courtship or the suitor. They were of the old Virginia family, and one can easily understand why that adventurous young man in his early twenties, and still much concerned about his boyhood limitations, thought it just as well not to ask their permission to pay his addresses to their daughter. On Thanksgiving day, 1903, the girl of seventeen, not yet through school, married him at Cheraw, and her parents decided to make the best of it.

Mrs. McLendon says now that then she really knew practically nothing about Baxter except that she loved him and he her. They went to Florida to live, and not for over a year did she know that he drank and gambled as well as kept books. Even in all the later years of his

more sordid life, she never saw him drunk but once—he kept away from his wife all the drab side of himself that he could. The fact is, that he loved his wife, and still loves her with a wild romantic abandon of affection that makes love the greatest force in the world.

Withal, there was some method in his madness of love. There had been other girls, fine girls, whom he could have married and sometimes considered marrying. But each of these lacked something he felt he needed in a wife—felt it by instinct, rather than by reason, undefinable to himself then, but yet a warning that he had not found all the essentials of the choice of a lifetime, albeit he could not definitely crystalise in his own mind what the missing trait was. He found it in Rena Ratcliffe, and forthwith the minister and the vows.

"If I had married any other woman in the world, I'd have gone clear to the bottom of hell," he said earnestly nearly a quarter of a century later to a group of friends in his home. "There's no other woman ever lived who could have guided me, and influenced me, and kept in sympathy with me while managing me, for all the years that would have worn out almost any other woman, and finally placed my feet on solid ground after lifting me out of the slime, except Rena. If I hadn't married her, it's horrible to think what I'd be today!"

Which piece of self analysis seems to be the precise truth. It is another example of a successful man who owes all he is to a woman—and sometimes a woman who pays with libations of tears and votive offerings of the best in herself as a self sacrifice for her husband. In her home town she is Miss Rena to everybody. Every careful student studying Baxter McLendon in the laboratory of biography must doff his hat and make obeisance to Miss Rena—without her, there would be no biography

worth writing; but for her the whole biography of the man would now be epitomised on a granite monument under his name in the form of some appropriate quotation from the scriptures for visitors to the graveyard to read. She made him a success as an evangelist; she has kept him alive; she is still as necessary to him as a rudder to a ship.

She stays at home and brings up a remarkable family of children. The multitudes in the tabernacles seldom see her. Most of them seldom think even a question about the evangelist's wife. But every day and every night, Miss Rena is at the other end of a telegraph wire, or mail route, or at the other telephone, and if she ever leaves her post there will be a debacle of dimensions fearful to think about. She seems satisfied with the reward of the love of her husband and the appreciation of her whole family—but the commensurate reward for her work and sacrifices can be awarded only by God in his heaven.

There never lived a man with more appreciation of friendliness, or who gave more richly of friendship in return. And no man ever persisted in one trait more consistently nor longer than this Baxter F. McLendon.

His is a self sacrificing friendship. The cost to himself is never counted when a call comes from a friend. As lately as after the beginning of the writing of this book, he gave up his vacation, absolutely a necessity to his health, and spent it in the state capital instead of following his fox hounds, because some old friends asked him to do so—and after his next sermon in the pulpit, went to bed, skidded near the brink of permanent total disability, and kept a skilled physician and a trained nurse employed and busy for some weeks. To him, the call of friendship was paramount to his own well being; it is as

sure as sunrise, that he would lay down his life for his friend and consider it a commoplace act. This is one of the very remarkable traits of this most remarkable man. It has persisted from his young manhood to the present day. It has cost him tens of thousands of dollars, many months of time, and thousands of foot-tons of work. And he would about as soon lose his religion as that friendship he feels—that superlative kind of friendship.

His definition of friendship he gives in a sermon, and it is a perfectly accurate description of the kind of friendship he feels and practices:

"I am true to my friends. I never professed friendship for any man and proved false. I don't shake your hand and pat you on the back, and rub your head and tickle your chin, caress and candy you, and give you soft boiled conversation and teeth exhibition, and then get behind your back and let somebody talk about you.

"I've always detested and always will detest and loathe these fair weather friends that will cling to you like leeches in your prosperity and forsake you in your adversity. Take it from me, the majority of the sons of men love the dividends of friendship, but not the assessments" —he had plenty of experience with leeches and men who invested in pseudo-friendship for dividends, but that has not lessened his own feeling in the least. There is not any cynicism in him, and the nearest he approaches caution in friendship is when he says:

"Friends don't come in bunches like bananas. In a lifetime, you can make thousands of acquaintances, but few genuine friends."

As regards that last sentence, his actions contradict it constantly—but perhaps as he grows older, he remembers it more often.

## A MAN IN A MORASS

The quietude of a somnolent Southern town in mid-afternoon of a summer day was shattered by the sound of four or five shots which had that lower, duller, deadlier resonance of a large caliber gun.

From the stores in Broad and Main streets came proprietors and clerks, and in a minute there was a broad fan of scattered men hurrying toward its apex in a grocery store not far from the intersection of the two chief business streets of the town. On the floor near the counter the first to arrive found a man lying at the edge of a pool of blood. At first, they thought the man on the floor was dead.

The tragedy that later trailed off into melodrama had occurred in the last couple of minutes. Baxter McLendon had rushed into the store with gray face and blazing eyes, threw down a revolver with careful aim at the heart of the proprietor, and pulled the trigger a satisfactory number of times—often enough to make sure that the man he shot would die very soon thereafter.

Pausing only the fraction of a minute required for the hammer of the pistol to come back and snap down a few times with a rapidity that filled the little grocery store with one reverberating roar, Baxter McLendon went on through the store and out the back door and on his way as fast as he had come through the front entrance. Outside, a short distance away, he found a horse and buggy belonging to the elderly Joe Breeden tied while its owner attended to business in town. The hurrying young man jerked the hitch strap loose from the post, jumped into the buggy and lashed the horse. With the buggy lurching behind a horse flying in a low, level run, he drove hellbent out of town by the Clio road.

In the short meantime, the officers of the law had joined the men who were crowding the little grocery store and obtained the central fact that Baxter McLendon had shot a man, apparently fatally, and was escaping in Joe Breeden's rig. They started after the fugitive, accompanied by the populace in a hue and cry on a trail that was plain in the beginning. A half dozen miles of pursuit on the road to Clio, and they found the buggy with the exhausted horse between the shafts standing at the side of the road where it passed through one of the large and dense swamps so common to the coastal plain of South Carolina. They did not see Baxter McLendon again for nearly two years. He had taken to the swamp, and although they searched in it all that night and for several days thereafter, they failed to bag their game.

Meanwhile the officers, and in another group the close friends of the young man, pieced out what had occurred just before the shots had wakened the town out of its August afternoon quiet routine. The previous act of the drama, which they had missed by their late arrival, had been this:

When the victim of the shooting fell afoul of the law by his bootlegging, McLendon had helped him out with an idea that their common interest and friendliness demanded this aid. But when McLendon found himself facing indictment for the illegal sale of liquors, he was told that his supposed friend and fellow bootlegger had given the officers the information which enabled them to make a case against the man who had recently so effectively befriended the other. It was an exceptionally irritating instance of the double cross in the underworld, whose denizens have a code of their own with death as the proper penalty for disloyalty to the gang.

With such a man as Baxter McLendon was then, with

his ancestors and early environment still working in him like yeast in a fermenting mash, the shooting was inevitable under the conditions. Its preliminaries were short and swift and determined. Their tragedy was also relieved by some comedy.

His own gun being a small one, when the urge came to kill the other bootlegger, young Baxter thought to borrow one, and naturally the revolver of an ex-sheriff would be a good one. So he went to Captain Ben Rogers and asked for the temporary loan of a pistol. After one look at Baxter's pale face and blazing eyes, the wise and always calm ex-sheriff drawled a question:

"What do you want with it, Baxter?"

"I want it to kill that black hearted——" the rest was too definite and emphatic to print here. The perfectly frank answer was in that even, low tone that is deadlier than any shouting. When Captain Rogers told him quietly that he ought not to do that and get himself into more trouble, Baxter became excited and even more emphatic in telling his fixed purpose.

"Now, Baxter," Captain Ben Rogers remarked slowly and soothingly, "you oughtn't to do that at all; but if you feel that way about it, shoot low, for he can shoot right smart, too, and if you don't get him right away, he'll get you."

The wise and fearless Captain Rogers was experienced in facing men threatening murder, and he recognised that nothing but blood could quench the fires burning in Baxter McLendon and blazing from his eyes and face. And since Baxter could not be deterred from shooting at a man judged to be of lesser value in the community, he did not want Baxter to miss and be killed by the return fire. As to the loan of his gun for the attack, he explained in the same slow, quiet, logical manner:

was the word which went to Baxter McLendon in the swamp about midnight.

He had slipped out to the edge of the thicket and down the cotton rows, with the sound of galloping horses on the road and of buggies going over the plank bridges in his ears and telling him of the chase for him that was on. On the edge of the swamp, he stealthily knocked on the door of Goon Covington, a trustworthy friend who greeted him with the exclamation: ?

"My God! Baxter, what did you do that for?"

"What?" Baxter asked to elicit whether the man he had shot was dead, as he hoped.

"You killed one man, an' the other's goin' ter die, an' they——"

"Why, I only shot one," Baxter interrupted; "how's there two?"

"You shot at one man, but another man got in the way of one bullet an' he's goin' ter die too," was the surprising and disturbing answer, "an' there's a thousand men out huntin' you. The sheriff an' three men went through this yard just a few minutes ago. They're sot on gittin' you and hangin' you, an' they're goin' ter beat the swamps ter find you."

It was arranged that Baxter should go far back in the swamps to a safe hiding place, and that Goon Covington should go to town the next day to get all the particulars he could and meet Baxter the next night in a shed in a cotton field with accurate information.

That next day, Baxter McLendon kept well hidden—feeling that every brush and bird spoke of a thousand men hunting him to hang him to a tree.

But through the oppression and stimulation of that sense of being hunted and of deadly danger, there ran

another theme, wonderful to relate, the persistent thought of years: "And yet, I'm called to preach!"

The very remarkable quality of that belief is nowhere more striking than in its persistence during that day in the swamp when it was mixed with the knowledge that he had killed two men and was being sought for the court of Judge Lynch.

The drama of that day is enhanced by a hard storm of lightning from black clouds that covered the sky and emitted terrific peals of thunder, with a gale blowing and bending the trees, and later a cloudburst of rain. The storm lasted several hours. It struck the sensitively impressionable youth to the marrow of his mind. He thought it might be that it was directed at him individually by a God who was angered at the boy called to preach ending his life swinging from a tree by a noosed rope.

But that night, in the shed in the cotton field, came other news by Goon Covington. Nobody was dead, and the sole wounded man might live, the doctor said. Instantly came to Baxter the reaction from his own love for life, after the danger of lynching—and again came uppermost that call to preach, this time in the sort of argument with God many persons have used on occasion:

"O, God! Don't let him die, and I'll preach yet; if he dies, I can't preach with the blood of a man on my hands!"

He said he would go to town and surrender, but his friend wisely counseled against that, until the excitement and feeling had cooled. So he went back into the deep swamp and hid there for some time. Of nights, he slept in the cabin of a loyal negro friend; by day, he staid away from the cabin, fished in the sloughs, sat on logs and watched the free and unhunted birds in the trees or in the water, walked for miles and marked down dense un-

dergrowth patches here and there which might be utilized if the man hunt became dangerously close, and whiled away the time that became monotonous, even as his eyes and ears were always alert.

After he left his friend that midnight, he never again heard the sound of the pursuit. In a few weeks, he told himself that it was safe to thread the swamp land on a long walk out of the state and that part of the country. That journey was a hard one with little excitement to relieve its laborious monotony. He kept on until he felt that he was outside the radius of any reports of that shooting in Bennettsville. Then he emerged into the big world, casually resumed his normal personality, and sought a job to earn a livlihood where his past was unknown and of a kind he would not be expected to choose.

Now, although they existed for the young man, because he had been told graphically that they were real and had heard nothing since to the contrary, as a matter of fact there never was any very large mob intent on a lynching party, and practically no ill feeling against Baxter McLendon back home in Bennettsville, or Marlboro county. The posse helping the officers to hunt him that first night were only a hundred or so men who always, everywhere in this country, join a hue and cry after a man wanted by the law out of sheer love of novelty in excitement and the herding of the crowd inherent in humanity. If they had found him that night, they would have turned him over to the sheriff for trial, and many of them, if given the opportunity, would have voted for his acquittal as jurymen. For them it was a rare sport in two senses of the word, and they had not the least trace of malignancy in them.

Even the highly respected cotton planter, Joe Breeden, was not indignant when he found his buggy horse

stove up beside the Clio road. When somebody spoke to him of the outrage upon him and his property, he replied cheerfully:

"Now, that was perfectly all right; he was in a hurry and saw my rig standing there, and knew he was welcome to it, if he could have asked me for it; I'd have done the same as him, if I'd been in his place right then. You see, he was in right smart of a hurry!"

The standing with the law officers of the man Baxter had shot and tried his best to kill is indicated by the composure of good Captain Ben Rogers in the matter of lending his revolver; the survivors of the population of that Bennettsville of over a quarter of a century ago—for the episode of the shooting occurred in 1900, in the very beginning of the new century—agree that Baxter McLendon's target had a bad reputation; he had come into the community not long before, his little grocery store was well recognised as merely a mask for his energetic bootlegging activities, and he lacked the traits that appeal to a Southerner of the South Carolina type.

Baxter McLendon, on the other hand, had outgrown some of his earlier resentful crustiness and was liked by many people, besides having some very warm friends who carefully worked upon public opinion for the benefit of the fugitive.

Also, they made some investigations into the surrounding circumstances of the shooting, and they played somewhat upon that dislike that regular, elected peace officers everywhere have for state police agents who intrude into the bailiwick of the regulars.

The quiet, but penetrating, investigations following the shooting on that summer afternoon disclosed that there was a man higher up in the bootlegging business in that county; that this higher up was a state constable

who was promoting his own prosperity by inducing men to become bootleggers, in order to increase the number of law violators who would pay him a percentage of their sales to secure his protection against their being bothered by the courts.

It is of some interest, that except for the long and hard persuasion of that state constable, Baxter McLendon might never have been a bootlegger and never have shot anybody.

Soon after the fugitive went into hiding so completely, all these things became known and talked about. What the law officers learned leaked out of the court house, as such things do; what his friends knew or discovered became favorable propaganda skillfully disseminated. In a short time, reactions of public opinion flowed back into the court house which is always sensitive to mass reactions. The sheriff did not feel justified in making an expense account against the county by a really big search for a man for whom he had no warrant and could not extradite without one—and he had his own private, unofficial opinions. The prosecuting attorney did not feel like imperiling his political fortunes by more zeal than sense in pushing such a case, and his successor in office, when elected, could not remember that there ever had been any shooting scrape that summer in Bennettsville.

Some good citizens went so far as openly to express regret that the bullets fired by Baxter McLendon had not proved fatal, and thus have made good riddance of bad rubbish, but in general the sentiment of the people was that the whole affair would best be forgotten and Baxter McLendon come home to his folks.

But it was a long year and a half before the fugitive knew all this, for he was too cautious to correspond with

Pnoto by Ackley

The barber shop which camouflaged the poker room from which the wild young man went in search of the gamblers to the gospel tent where he was converted. The man in the rear chair is his father, Thomas McLendon.

his folks at home under the conditions as they were to him, however different to the people of his home town and community. So he made an honest living with his hands, until he learned the true situation back home.

He wandered northward, for regardless of mileage the North seemed and was the most distant from the South. He experienced the vicissitudes of the wanderer. After getting clear of the coastal region of the Carolinas, he passed through thinly settled sections and towns, and small cities meeting the inhabitants as that commonplace, a young man seeking work with more or less energy.

He finally settled down in the Long Run coal mines in Jefferson county, Ohio. He was not so incongruous as a miner as appears at first glance. An essay might be written on why the high strung, emotional natures adopt coal mining for a vocation—why the majority of coal miners are of Italian, Hungarian, Polish and other highly emotional nationalities. The volatile Baxter McLendon was at home among those hyphenates who were his fellow miners in Ohio.

That he was in the night shift was of little consequence, since a coal mine is as dark at noon as the inside of a camera at midnight. He could hardly become melancholy among the cheerful Angelos and Tonys with whom he worked and who patiently taught him the new vocation. Those months in the coal mine did have a good deal to do with his development. Mining coal is not boys' play, and he needed most something to ripen and mature him into a grown man. He never did become thoroughly mature, but that mining experience made him more manly if not more moral. There he was in the midst of great forces in blasting powder, and the pressure of primal rocks and shafts driven deep, opening into vast tunnels in which were monster machinery and strong fans con-

tinually in motion. He felt big things in action. He attained a wider horizon. He himself became larger in his ideas and less satisfied with lesser things. His ambition was stimulated from the ordinary to the extraordinary, as his life in the mines was extraordinary to the youth from the flat, swampy, cotton plantation terrain of his native Marlboro county.

This effect of the coal mines upon his character would appear years later in his quality as a preacher, the high standards he set for himself, and his success as an evangelist. But the first result of his work in the mines, in the night shift, was to be seen in him, as soon as he returned home. That expansion applied just then to his activities of the time, and these were decidedly not evangelistic. Bennettsville was too dull for him; playing poker for stakes as high as he wished with rich planters, or penny ante with smaller fry, was too tame a sport; even the monopoly of bootlegging in Marlboro county seemed to be a piker business; he had seen things through different spectacles, and he was dissatisfied with the scanter opportunities for vice in his home town. Working in a coal mine had something to do with his later life in Florida as well as with his contrasting life as a minister of the gospel. It made them both fuller lives than they otherwise would have been.

When he finally received the information that he could safely return home, he quit his mining job, said his farewells in libations to the Italian and other miners, and in the day coach of a train entered the home town from which he had departed in the amiable Joe Breeden's buggy so rapidly a couple of years previously.

The years during which the schoolboy was growing into a man were strenuous ones for him, full of episodes, some of which were turning points in his life; but after all not very extraordinary for such an energetic youth, restless as the ocean and ambitious to do things—to do things without much regard for whether they were for good or evil. He was steadily, always ambitious—ambitious to excel in whatever might be the work for the week, be it dealing poker hands, weighing cotton, tending bar in his own saloon, or selling goods over the counter of a country town general store.

He lived with his parents on the Hugh McCallum plantation below Blenheim for some years. His father was a tenant on the plantation which was a large one devoted to cotton raising.

It was restlessness in part, but it was chiefly determination to better his circumstances and condition, that made life there irksome for the youth into which he had grown. Almost anything was a good job for him,—if it was different from plantation work. When he said at this time that he emphatically would not work in the field, for that was work for negroes and he would be eternally perdu if he would do it, it was an expression of his determination, sometimes deep down in despair, to pull himself out of the stratum in which he was born and accomplish something in the world not everybody can do. He experimentally tried many things in his search for the exit from the maze in which he was lost just then.

This experimenting in vocations—generally it was taking the most attractive job easiest to secure, and more

often it was forcing himself into a job more in line with his ambitions—led him into various paths. It had much to do with his future, sometimes intentionally, sometimes rather surprising to himself in its most important factors.

It brought him into contact with people and proved that he could manage them diplomatically when he chose to do so; it illustrated his tremendous energy seeking to be transformed into work; it increased his reputation in what maturity admires in youth; it brought him one of the first of his important friends; it made him a gift of a thorough course in a business college and at first made him a guard of convicts working in a chain gang.

South Carolina utilizes her convicts as builders of roads and other public works in chain gangs under superintendents and guards armed with Winchesters and shot guns. Whipping is the punishment for violation of rules and regulations prescribed by authority. Many of the convicts were negroes. The young Baxter McLendon had himself appointed a guard, and the position paid very well. That job was not at all suited to his characteristics, and he did not keep it very long; but it led him into one of the most important phases of his career.

As a guard he was given the night shift by himself which gave undivided authority and much opportunity for half the time. His constant sympathy for the under dog made him seek means to lighten the lives of the convicts as much as possible. Sometimes he would have the cook prepare a feast of a late supper; in many ways he afforded his charges a modicum of pleasure, but without relaxing discipline. The convicts all grew to like him, and they in turn made his job an easy one for the night guard. Also, this night guard knew everything that occurred in the camp during his hours on duty.

One morning when the supervisor was on a visit of in-

spection the superintendent reported that a negro convict named John had brought a woman into camp at night. Baxter heard John ordered out of the roadside ditch to be whipped. The night guard inquired the reason and told the supervisor that the woman had only brought John some clean clothes which she left at the entrance. The superintendent disputed Baxter's version and insisted that John must be whipped hard and at once to maintain discipline—not only over the convicts, but his own over the guards, he intimated. Then came one of those explosions in Baxter McLendon so frequent in the annals of his life.

His black eyes blazed. His gun swung gently at the ready. He said John should not be whipped and would not be whipped. He made it apparent that the whipping could be prevented easily by his shooting down the superintendent before the cat could swing. The cruel superintendent with a grudge against the poor negro in his chain gang took one good look at Baxter's flaming, determined face and wilted. The inspecting supervisor was worried. He naturally wanted to support the superintendent over the guard, but he was just and shrewd, and he sensed that Baxter was right. He quizzed both of them and believed Baxter. But his decision that John should not be whipped did not affect his own problem of management. He could not discharge Baxter, appointed by other authority, and he saw that with that guard under that superintendent he had a mixture that was likely to explode with a fatal result some time. There had been several similar clashes all due to Baxter's determination that humanity should be a large part of the penal policy of South Carolina in that section of it.

In Bennettsville, Colonel C. S. McCall was the leading merchant, proprietor of the general store, and cotton

buyer. He had noticed Baxter when the latter came into the store to make some purchase. Like everybody, he marked the young man down as an extraordinary youth, and like a successful merchant he made a note of promising material for his list of employees. To him went the worried supervisor to ask about the chain gang guard who had come near killing his immediate superior a few days before—and to express his wish to get rid of that guard.

Colonel McCall advised sending Baxter on an errand to the store, and when the young man was at his counter casually began to talk to him. Within a few minutes Baxter was hired to weigh cotton for Col. McCall and had gone to file his resignation as a chain gang guard. Weighing cotton was work for which Baxter was peculiarly fitted.

There was constant, if unfounded, suspicion among the cotton growers that they were being cheated in weights—one phase of the idea prevalent among all farmers that all buyers are dishonest. Certain growers had established reputations as forceful complainers whenever any of their cotton bales came to the scales, and buyers had listed these men as incorrigibles whom nobody could satisfy.

The worst of them brought in cotton very soon after Baxter went to work at the scales. He was an ex-Confederate soldier distinguished most by his hatred of the Yankees and his ability to scourge them with his tongue as valiantly as he had fought them with his musket. When he arrived at the weighing platform, Baxter accosted him at once with:

"Did you whip the Yankees that last day in the Wilderness?"

"Whipped the Yankees! Why we———" and the old soldier was off into a description of a big battle and

proper enthusiasm about the prowess displayed that day by his regiment, his company and himself. Baxter listened deferentially and with absorbed attention as the tale was unfolded—until the cotton was all weighed without the least watchfulness on the part of the grower. The man whose specialty was whipping and hating Yankees and roasting cotton scales went to the store and to the amazement of the cotton buyer said:

"Colonel McCall, you've got one cotton weigher that's got sense."

The astute Colonel McCall at once gave Baxter a list of all the growers who were the worst customers to handle by the cotton weighers and the young man at the scales received the praises of all of them as a man who could be trusted to be fair with them. This was an asset of character and diplomacy appreciated by his employer—it really showed extraordinary ability to manage difficult people of very irritating kind who have the complaint complex firmly fixed; they must be handled not only with fair treatment, but with much diplomacy.

Seven months of hard work followed. Weighing cotton and its diplomacy did not furnish enough real work for that industrious youth. In the hours after the line of wagons with burlap wrapped cotton bales had all passed the scales, Baxter went inside the warehouse to help unload cars of merchandise or pile up the bales. Every evening, he went behind the counter in the general store, and every morning he clerked in the store until the first wagons of cotton arrived to be weighed. For a long time, he had felt an ambition to be a salesman in that store every time he entered it to make a purchase; now, he was determined to become so familiar with the stock and so good a salesman behind the counter that he would be kept there after the cotton buying season closed. He

did learn the large and complicated stock of the store better than some of the old clerks knew it.

One evening Colonel McCall told Baxter to take a gang of negroes next morning and have them unload a carload of lime that had just arrived. When the store closed that night at ten o'clock, Baxter decided that it was too early to go to bed, and he had not done enough that day, anyhow—so he went out by himself and unloaded one hundred fifty barrels of lime from freight car to warehouse without any help before he called it a day and turned in. Next morning, he was behind the counter as usual when Colonel McCall came in. The proprietor glared at Baxter as he passed, and as soon as he reached his office sent for the amateur, volunteer clerk, to bark at him:

"I told you to take some niggers and unload that car of lime this morning."

"Yes; sir; you did," Baxter agreed.

"Then why aren't you doing it, instead of standing around here?" There was pent up wrath in every syllable of the colonel.

"I did it by myself last night after the store closed," Baxter apologetically argued.

Colonel McCall was a consistent churchman and his later acts proved him to be a real christian, but also he was of stern, Scotch stock seldom showing emotion, and when he heard that the youth had unloaded that lime without help around midnight, instead of bossing some negroes doing it next morning as directed, the colonel stared his amazement and gasped:

"Well, I'll be damned!"

When the cotton weighing time ended April first the next spring, and Baxter's contracted term of service at the scales was completed, he went to Colonel McCall and asked to continue in his employ as a clerk in the store.

He got a gruff and bluff refusal. His heart sank and became as heavy as lead. It was for him as much disappointment as anybody could give him in a single sentence. He tried to argue for the clerkship, but in his distress and surprise—for he thought he had earned the place—he could only stammer and gasp out broken sentences. He was cut short in his attempt to talk himself into that clerkship by a command from Colonel McCall.

Baxter was told to go upstairs and get himself a trunk and put in it an outfit of clothing—for Colonel McCall was going to send him to business college at Augusta for a full course there.

That completed the stupefication of Baxter McLendon. He was being sent to school! He was dumbfounded. Having despaired of ever getting an education—and that despair was heartrending and soul scarring to the boy—he had directed his ambition to being clerk in a store in a country town; and his efforts to attain that clerkship had started him to school! Because he had believed schooling unattainable for him, he had gone to work as guard of a chain gang, and that had thrust him into an excellent business college. No traveler dying of thirst in the desert ever felt more joy at finding an oasis than Baxter McLendon felt when Colonel McCall told him he was to go to business college and at once.

He put the new outfit into the new trunk, went to Augusta, worked hard enough in the business college to carry off the highest honors and learn much that was to be very useful to him later selling books—and painful to him later in the mathematics room of a Methodist college—and after completing the business course, he returned to Bennettsville and reported to Colonel McCall on the hottest day of the hottest month of a very hot summer.

It was stifling hot, one of those torrid days that come

to South Carolina in July occasionally, when Baxter got home dressed like an honor graduate of a big city business college. He went to the McCall store and told his benefactor that he was ready to go to work at once.

"Just in time!" Colonel McCall glowed. "On the back of the lot here where the fire was, the bricks must be piled up. You go out there and pile up them bricks right." And with that he turned to a customer. Without the slightest change of expression in his face, Baxter turned to the rear of the store, donned a pair of overalls, and went on back to the lot and began to pile up brick out of a fallen wall. An hour later Colonel McCall came out, looked at the pile of bricks increasing rapidly is size, slapped Baxter on the back and rendered his verdict:

"You'll do!"

It was a verdict he never changed, even when most people said he had been mistaken. When, soon after, the booze and vice era in the life history of Baxter McLendon began, some persons derided Colonel McCall for having previously praised Baxter so highly and so often and having predicted great things for the youth's future. The canny Scot always told those who jeered to wait and see, for he was still confident Baxter would get into the right road and arrive somewhere worth while.

Baxter McLendon had two years' experience in that general store, in a small town surrounded by plantations and swamps, and it was an experience that stood him in good stead all the rest of his life. He worked hard both behind the counter and in the office on the books. There is no better school in which to learn human nature in all its complexities than in a general store in a country town selling goods over the counter part of the time, and keeping and collecting the accounts the rest of the time day after day for two years.

He had learned to be a good bookkeeper, and he became a superior clerk. He sold more goods each month than any other clerk, and some of them were old, experienced salesmen there. He had studied and planned how to sell goods to the people who came to the store, and as always learned all there was to know, or invent, about any job he undertook. In every test the shrewd Scotch merchant made of his clerks, Baxter McLendon made the highest marks. Once the merchant gave a package for mailing to each of the eight clerks, telling each mail it carefully, as it might become necessary for him to testify in court that he had mailed it. Only Baxter noticed that the package was addressed to Marshall-Field with a street number, but no postoffice on the label.

But with all the change of work involved in going to business college, clerking in a general store, and weighing cotton, Baxter McLendon was restless. He sought entertainment and excitement after the fashion of many youths. He began to drink a little, and then more. He began to romp out o'nights and then to carouse. Cards and whiskey were about the liveliest exciters in his home county, and the young man utilized them to the full for activity and entertainment. Other youths were seeking excitement by the same means, though none of them with quite the avidity of this one, and the Baxter McLendon of that era of his life was as wild and ungovernable as any of the descendants of the cavaliers of that state.

Once he bought a small stock of groceries and opened a little grocery store in Bennettsville, using it largely as camouflage for less innocent things. That store was soon generally recognised as the visible front of a bootlegging business. Certainly, he did not try to sell groceries, for he did not sell many, and if he had tried, he

fluences and environment in which he was submerged at Bennettsville. They moved up into Richmond County, North Carolina, and after getting settled in his new home, the father wrote Baxter to come there to live with his parents. Baxter welcomed the invitation just then and crossed the state line ahead of the warrants which had no force in North Carolina.

He did not emulate the prodigal's repentance and appreciation of his father. Instead, he began to investigate the new neighborhood for its intoxicating possibilities and wild life stimulations. The first morning after his arrival, he quickly selected the right negro to lead him to a supply of good white corn likker.

He bought five gallons, and the negro carried it to one of the cabins where it would be safe from both pilferers and parental discovery. As he followed his negro porter, he met in the road a handsome young lady of evident refinement, breeding and brains who had almost passed him, when she turned toward him and asked courteously whether he was not Mr. Baxter McLendon. Then she talked charmingly and earnestly to him about as follows:

"Isn't that likker that negro is carrying, and isn't it yours? I hate to see a young man like you do such things. Your father and mother are fine folks, and I heard they moved up here to get you away from bad company. Your kin are all fine people. You show the marks of being too good a young man to dissipate so much. You dress well and look well, and it's a pity you act like you do. Why don't you stop it?"

The most appealing thing to Baxter McLendon about that lecture in the road was the bright eyes, flushed cheeks and earnestness of a pretty girl. He hurried on to overtake the negro and cargo he was convoying to get it

stowed away before anybody else saw it. The incident is important as one of many showing how even strangers felt the impulse to save that attractive young man from himself. There never was a wayward young man surrounded by more angels clothed in earthly bodies than he was wherever he roamed.

Baxter McLendon worked successfully at some new vocations around his new home in North Carolina. He taught writing schools for awhile, and the copies he set were the wonder of the community. His writing was like copperplate engraving, and when the natives saw it, they would exclaim, "Laws! Ain't it wonderful!" He was ingenious in devising ways to make a living, and he would not work on any plantation, including the one on which his father was a tenant then.

One day the landlord rode on his horse up to the gate of the tenant house and accosted Baxter with a question:

"What are you doing?"

"Nothing," Baxter drawled.

"Well, why don't you help your father here on the place?" the landlord flung out; "he says he needs some hands." The retort of Baxter came like a flash, voicing his lifetime hatred of plantation work:

"To hell with the help! I don't work on no damn plantation! I'll hire a nigger to help him if he wants me to, but I'm not going to do it myself. I can make more money shaking hands with my friends than I could make on the whole plantation, if I owned it."

In fact he always made a good living from the time he left home to become a chain gang guard, and he was working again soon after his arrival in North Carolina, and before long at selling something. This time it was a book, a business guide it was called, a compendium of

an immense number of facts more or less connected with commercial pursuits, but especially designed to sell to men who knew little or nothing about business arithmetic, customs or law. This particular vocation of book salesman is of special interest in the light it throws upon fundamental characteristics that Baxter F. McLendon had and exhibited all his life.

The manner in which he went to work to sell that book tells much about the way he does, and has always done, everything he undertakes. It promised to be a profitable business, if he sold any considerable number, for the book cost him forty cents and sold for $1.75. He determined to multiply item profit by large sales volume. He did, in his own individual way.

It was January when he took the agency for the business guide and he spent the time until September hard at work memorising every fact and figure in that book—a prodigious feat for even a good memory, for it was a veritable encyclopaedia of data and all sorts of queer wrinkles in arithmetic. To make the fact the more amazing, he actually memorised the number of the page upon which each fact and figure was located. He also became facile in all the arithmetical features of the business guide from short cuts in computing interest to the measurement of lumber and calculation of bushels of corn in a crib. Then he felt ready to start the actual selling.

He began his selling campaign on the west coast of Florida, after selling some books around his home in Richmond County, North Carolina, to test his method and obtain some practice at it. His manner of selling in one county of Florida serves well to illustrate his salesmanship, and at the same time illuminates much more in the real Baxter McLendon.

He first walked in on a bank president to whom he

handed the business guide, as he told the financier that he had no schooling except what he got from that book; and he at once asked the banker to give him any page number. The banker called a number, and the young stranger recited that page. Another page number, and the contents of that page given fluently, law business customs, computations of figures, or what not. The banker became interested in the new game and gave Baxter page number after page number, containing rapid calculation of interest at odd rates for odd number of days, ascertaining how many board feet there are in an irregular pile of lumber of various widths and lengths, and all the other curiosities of arithmetic. Baxter rattled off the whole thing, whatever it might be, as glibly as a star pupil recites the multiplication table on the last day of a country school.

The bank president called in all his clerical force to see the show, and in a little while the visiting phenomenon had sold a book to everybody in the bank from the president to the janitor. Next he inveigled the banker into giving him a letter saying that was a good book to have handy. Then he went out and really began to sell books throughout the countryside. By the aid of his demonstration of what the book would do educationally, as shown by his own remarkable knowledge of the things within its covers, and with the help of the letter from the most prominent banker for miles around, he sold books to market gardeners, workmen in saw mills, cigar makers, farm hands, hotel clerks, winter tourists, factory workmen, and every other variety of humankind in that county. He sold sixty-five in one day. And since he has always been industrious, he was not satisfied to make a big day's wages in daylight, but he mounted a street corner stand

at night and sold business guides to the urban population even faster than he could sell them in the daytime.

The resulting income was large, especially for a young man whose family had never experienced the time when economy was unnecessary. It was easy money, easily made and easy to spend. It opened wider the doors of entertainment that had become dissipation, and drinking and gambling had become the acme of enjoyment for him. His routine finally became one of selling business guides part of the time and devoting the rest of the time to spend-the profits for whiskey and staking them at poker. Then occurred the most remarkable of all the examples of others acting upon a great desire to help Baxter McLendon.

In the Florida west coast town of Largo was the usual type of frame hotel catering to the traveling salesmen who staid a day at a time regularly. Baxter McLendon took a room there more permanently, and in a little while that room was used most for poker parties attended by a group of men he quickly rounded up, who were devotees of jackpots and anxious for the greater thrills of having a card in the hole.

The games in that room were both high and wet. In that hotel were gathered gamblers and pariahs of society from every part of the country and several foreign lands. Baxter was looked upon as a leader of that conglomeration of soul soiled humanity; he slept in the daytime and gambled most of the night.

In the town resided the family of Mr. Phil Defenworth, a christain family, the rarity of whose godliness will be apparent in this story of what they did. All its members were of one kind, charming, intellectual, keen, sensible, hospitable and charitable. They were impressed, as so many others were all during his life, by the under-

lying good they saw in the strange young man stopping at the hotel and drinking and gambling in the lead of a very fast set. They did not hold up their hands in horror and talk about the viciousness of men and say something ought to be done about it. They proceeded to do something about it themselves. They still live in Florida, but insist that what they did was only casual and natural. We shall see.

One day a young man accosted Baxter in the street and said; "I'm the son of the Rev. James Defenworth, and my uncle Phil and Aunt Carrie and Julia want you to come out to their home and live with them." When Baxter expressed some of his surprise and asked for more explanation, the man went on: "Well, their father, who is my grandfather, was a Methodist preacher who has been dead for some time, and they live out there by themselves, a brother and two sisters." When Baxter, still mystified, asked how they came to know him, he was told:

"They've been paying right smart of attention to you since you've been in Largo, and they're interested in you." Baxter demurred that they did not know the kind of life he was living, but the man said they did know all about that. Then Baxter objected that going into a private home would not suit him, nor the people keeping the home, because his habits of life were so different from those people living decently. But the man would not listen to objection and talked on:

"Yes; we've talked the thing all over, and we know exactly how you're living and what you are; and all we want you to do is to come out there, and they'll give you a nice room and treat you the very best they know how."

Baxter persisted that he could not think of doing such

a thing and that his life would not fit into theirs. The man kept on insisting and begging that he go at least to try it awhile. Once, Baxter tried to walk on, but the man followed him to say:

"Just come out for one week, then, and live with them, and if it doesn't suit you, you can leave and no fault found." Baxter then played his trump card and retorted emphatically:

"I drink likker and make my living gambling, and I run with the crowd at the hotel—and I won't change, if I go to your Uncle Phil's. They won't want my kind of a man there; and for the same reason, I don't want to go."

"We're not going to try to get you to change any...." the man argued with the wisdom of the serpent and with a persistence that nobody could hold out against. After a long time, he overrode Baxter's protest, and when Baxter finally agreed to try it, he called across the street to his watching Uncle Phil:

"Go get Mack's trunk."

That was the end of the first conversation between the two, and the meeting was the first time Baxter had seen the persistent young Largo man. It was the beginning of a very important and unique effort to save a youth who was well worth saving.

Baxter followed his trunk out to the Defenworth home, which was a large, beautiful house about a mile from down town. He was welcomed with the hospitality that has made the South famous and treated with as much courtesy as though he were the governor of South Carolina. He arrived in time for the noontime dinner, and after a quarter of a century his eyes brighten as he recalls that good dinner.

When they told him that Phil would bring him out to supper that evening, but a little late, he said he would eat

down town, but Aunt Carrie said with irresistible charm:

"No; we're going to have something extra specially for you, and we want you here for supper. You can leave right away after supper, if you want to."

That supper was especially for him in more ways than he imagined at noon. There was course after course, served slowly, with bright conversation all the time flashing across the table, and the minutes sped on into an hour or more—and before the dessert was finished, a crowd of young people were flocking into the house with chatter and little shouts, as is the fashion of young people everywhere. Miss Carrie explained:

"Baxter,"—they all called him that from the beginning—"we've a little party for you here tonight and we've invited the young people of the community to come in—they belong to the best people in our country, and we're anxious for you to meet them."

Baxter realised that he was fairly trapped and would play no poker that night. But he also felt the admiration that one canny manager yields to another, even though he himself is outgeneraled; and there was a big element of surprise, too, not only at the trap closing on him, but that those people should take so much trouble to keep him away from his usual haunt at the hotel. Since he needs must stay at that party, he made the most of it. That was easy, for all the others lionised him and showed him the courtesy of courtiers, and he really enjoyed himself hugely. The party kept in full swing until two o'clock in the morning—they were making sure that it should displace and not be merely a curtain raiser for any other stag party in a hotel room. But even if the clock had struck two, they took no chances. As the last of the young people started home, Miss Carrie took Baxter's arm and said:

"Come on upstairs; I want to show you something." Upstairs, she opened a door as she stood in the hall and commanded with a charming smile:

"Young man, you just step in there and go to bed!" Which he did. The next evening after supper, as Baxter pushed back his chair at the table, Miss Carrie smiled at him and said:

"Baxter, we've accepted an invitation for you as our guest to go over to a neighbor's house tonight to a big oyster roast. We feel that they'll be hurt, if we don't go and take you with us." Again, most of the young people of the community were there, and Baxter enjoyed the party until a late hour, when, he says, "Miss Carrie brought me back home and parked me again."

And the next evening one of the men found him down town and took him out to supper, and after supper Miss Carrie, the enchantress and manager, remarked with an air that meant she relied on the chivalry of the young man guest in their home:

"Do you know, Julia isn't feeling well tonight, and I've just got to have somebody to go to prayer meeting with me, and I don't know of anybody unless Baxter will take me."

Baxter felt a surge of anger, but it was mixed with hopelessness, for he recognised the futility of struggling, as he thought, "I've got myself into a hell of a mess!" But the anger was momentary, as the sense of futility in attempting to escape remained—and also by that time he was so appreciative of the treatment he was receiving, of their courtesy and graciousness, and of the real enjoyment he was getting out of his new associations with a very high class family, that his struggles to escape the net in which they enveloped him became weaker and weaker; he gradually resigned himself to the new con-

ditions made by the Defenworth family, although his surprise at the change never left entirely.

It was a radical change. They absolutely divorced him from his old associates and vices. He did not play another game of cards nor roll the cubical, spotted bones again while he staid in Largo. Wednesday evenings found him at prayer meeting as the escort of Miss Carrie Defenworth. He was her gallant at church on Sunday mornings and evenings. He responded to the advances of her own associates and made them more or less his own friends. He got a new slant of observation upon the cosmos. A quarter of a century afterward, he said one of the greatest regrets of his life was what he felt when he said goodbye to the Defenworth family at St. Petersburg and took the boat for Tampa one day. He is talking from his heart when he says:

"I have never seen them since, but they are wrapped around the fibers of my heart, and I have loved them from that day to this."

And so, those Defenworths did Baxter F. McLendon an immense amount of good, by the campaign they planned and carried out patiently and remarkably skillfully. As an amateur reform movement it merits the highest praise. Baxter McLendon appreciated it then, and appreciates it the more the older he grows.

But with all its other superlative phases, that episode finds its place in a study of his life as one of the very remarkable demonstrations that other people went to the greatest trouble, and took the greatest pains to help Baxter McLendon. Very few men have ever attracted such helpfulness throughout their lives, especially when the good in them was smeared with a thick coating of evil. The Defenworth family's aid did not convert him from his wicked ways, but it lessened considerably the

sum total of evil which he was to repent in later years.

He left them and went on his way—a variegated way, anything but straight, although there was in it one short straight stretch of six months after his marriage, during which he neither drank a drop nor played a hand of poker. During this same interval he was working as a bookkeeper for a large fruit firm; this was between selling business guides and keeping a saloon, in the era filled chiefly with things not so respectable as bookkeeping.

As in everything he undertook, he was a success as a bookkeeper for Janes Brothers, of Little River, Florida. He worked so hard and so well, and was so faithful to his employers, that the firm wanted to keep him as long as possible, and told him when he quit that his desk was waiting for him any time he would return to it. But after the six months of abstention from poker and whiskey, he dropped back into the old habits. He was as competent a bookkeeper and as hard a worker as ever during office hours, but outside of office hours he was soon drinking and gambling as assiduously as ever. He did not let his pleasures interfere with his duties to his employers; but neither did he allow his duties to throttle his pleasures.

He resigned the ruler, pen and double inkstand in the fruit firm's office to enter the saloon business. Of course, gambling was a concomitant of selling drinks over the bar. This saloon is the landmark of his career in Florida.

While his life and activities in Florida were sordid enough compared with his later religious life and the piety of his forebears, it has certain brighter episodes that are important as omens of his future and indexes to his real, basic character. The influence of the Defenworth family was not the only thing which indicated that

there was still inside Baxter McLendon a bedrock of character from which he could spring upward.

Once a woman came to him in the saloon to tell how her husband was leaving his family in want for food while he spent his wages over that bar. The next time the man came in, Baxter told him he could have a drink thereafter only when he brought a written request from his wife that he be given it. His reward was the glorious thanks of that good woman later and a glimpse of a happy home where there had been only squalor.

One night a traveling salesman in an ordinary game of poker came out loser—Baxter's livelihood came from his consistent winning of course, and his customers generally lost. This one had the usual erroneous idea that if he played long enough he would win in the end. He pulled a large roll of money from an inside pocket and insisted that the limit be raised. He quit only when he had lost his last dollar. When the sun was shining in the East, Baxter awoke to find the salesman sobbing in the hotel room. The man said he had lost not only his own money but all his expense money and several hundred dollars belonging to his firm and was a ruined defaulter. He also said he did not blame Baxter in the least for playing with him in the later, heavier stages of the game at his own insistence. Baxter returned to the salesman all the money that had passed across the poker table, but only on one condition—he bargained strictly that the man never play another gambling game as long as he lived. It was an investment in a man, the endowment of character—and Baxter had never seen him before the crucial poker game began the previous evening.

During all the Florida era of his life he was very restless, as youth just entering the twenties is apt to be-

come. It was a mixed up melange of bookkeeping, playing poker, selling business guides, keeping saloon, dipping into this and that illegitimate activity, appearing a gentleman of leisure while operating a gambling business, first one and then another, and then a return to the former one—the desire for change and excitement being about the only outstanding factors in his personal equation during that epoch. There were some flickerings of his real better nature at times, but these were will o' the wisps in a dark, dank morass. The most important things occurring during that rather harumscarum time was his meeting the North Carolina girl who was to become his wife and his marrying her; that story is told in other pages.

An incident in Florida is pregnant with information about the real Baxter McLendon, that bundle of paradoxes.

He was walking down a back street in St. Petersburg one day, when he came upon several brand new tents before one of which was a glaring sign announcing that inside could be found the World's Greatest Palmist, one Professor Stryker, who had been educated in Russia and was now condescending to give the people of the Florida towns the benefit of his very remarkable talents and knowledge. Baxter decided that he would invest five dollars in a scientific determination of his fate as disclosed by the lines in his hand.

He walked in upon a very handsome man who invited him to take a seat, and when Baxter said he craved a reading remarked:

"Well, things are a little dull just now; no use to be in a hurry."

The palmist followed this remark with an invitation to take a glass of beer. He sent across the street and

got six bottles of beer and called in his wife, a very attractive woman whom he introduced to the young man. Instead of reading Baxter's palms, Professor Stryker tried to make them itch by telling him the profits in the profession of palmistry, how easily it was to be learned, and that Baxter could learn it from him within a week. He also asked Baxter to join him as a partner. It was nearly midnight after a day over the beer and the champagne Baxter had bought to make more sociable the conversation with the palmist and his wife, before the young man left them. Baxter had not given a definite decision about joining the two and becoming a palmist.

A few weeks later, Baxter encountered the pair again in the dining room of a Plant City hotel, and they warmly welcomed the young man. They took Baxter up to their room and argued with him that he should join them in business and make much money. The large receipts and the methods of separating a sucker from his money were explained in detail. Baxter was given a little book, a vade mecum textbook on palmistry as it was practiced in Florida resorts, and was taught all the finer points in the profession not found in the little book. The trio played poker as they talked, and before daylight it was decided that Baxter was to become a palmist in their tent.

He at once dressed the part. The others had told him he must wear his hair pompadour and have his moustache waxed and twisted up at the ends like those of the German over-officers. Having attended to this the first thing in the morning, he diligently studied the little text book with that remarkable memory of his, and by noon felt qualified to take his place at the table in the tent as a wondrous scientist learned in all the occult details of palmistry. He gave several readings that first day while Professor Stryker and his wife listened in, and

these worthies and preceptors of Baxter pronounced him perfect in the part.

It was the peak of the tourist season, and the principal patrons of the palmist were rich northerners. "It is marvelous how we could fool those rich Yankees," Baxter reminiscences. "They would swallow that stuff, even people who were educated on every other matter, and you could tell them anything and they would believe it." Certainly, Baxter McLendon was certified a master palmist in those Florida coast towns where he operated.

In this respect the incident is another example of the thoroughness and success with which Baxter McLendon always did and does anything he undertakes. The end of his professional practice as a palmist throws light upon another phase of his character that he has had from boyhood to the present day.

One Sunday afternoon Baxter heard Mrs. Stryker calling him from the lower hall of their hotel:

"Professor, come down; here's a gentleman that wants a reading."

Baxter went down and started toward the palmistry mysteries tent with the man he found at the hotel door. It was a lank, lean, long, hungry looking, pale faced native, wearing trousers that did not meet his socks, a heavy pair of old brogan shoes and a tight little overcoat drawn up in the back, who had come to town behind an old mule driven by rotten rope lines. This rustic told Baxter in a confidential tone that he had longed to know for what he was best fitted and had come to town to find out from the learned and mystical palmist he had heard talked about.

As they walked along the street, Baxter asked searching questions, and the man told that he owned no land,

nor a house, but rented a few acres to grow strawberries and vegetables. As Baxter continued to quiz him in efforts to discover some assets of which the man was owner, the new customer for palmistry summed it all up thus:

"I'm a poor man; I don't own nothing."

As Baxter listened and looked, his thoughts went back to his own kinfolks, some of whom after the civil war looked much like the man he was escorting to the lair of the palmist. He remembered his own poverty and that of his father, and how much care had to be exercised in the spending of every dime they had—and he realised to the full how much to the victim walking beside him the five dollars charged for a reading would mean. There had been silence of a minute as the two walked along, and then the real Baxter McLendon began to talk in earnest:

"Mister, do you know that we're down here, not to tell fortunes of poor people, but to skin rich fellows that come down from the North and want to be faked. There's nothing in the world to this thing. We're just fakers, pulling the money out of the people that are able to afford it."

"M-m-m-man!" the native spluttered. "Do you mean ter tell me there's nothing in this palmistry?"

"I mean to tell you that very thing," Baxter replied in his most emphatic tone, and that we're just grafters robbing people that want to be gypped out of their money and have plenty of it, and if you have five dollars, use it on something else, for this is a pure fake."

"You must be a good man!" the repelled victim ejaculated.

"No;" Baxter replied; "I'm as mean as the devil."

The two parted, and Baxter went back to the hotel where Mrs. Stryker met him at the door and asked wheth-

er the man had a reading. His reply surprised her speechless:

"No; I told him it's a damn fake. I'm through with it for life. I don't propose to rob poor people, nor rich people either; if I play poker with them, I give them a chance to win, but to this game, there's only one side."

Then and there he quit the fortune telling business at which he had made money rapidly. That he should do so was logical, for with all his adventures into gambling and other vices, he never hurt the poor. The incident illustrates the fact that in all phases of his life to the present day, his heart and energies are always sympathetic with those oppressed by fate or other men.

During the Florida era, Baxter McLendon came upon another under dog which as usual urged him into action in its behalf—this time action as sensational as it was surprising to his cronies there.

Baxter was in his element in a town where there was a saloon on every street corner and gambling galore everywhere. He belonged and was recognised by the dominant vice element as one of their prominent members.

Jimmie Little came to town to be a reformer and abolish the intrenched vice from that municipality. He drove through the streets in a rented buggy behind a horse carrying a muslin cover on each side of which was painted: "The dirty saloons must go." The plan was not very effective to make a dry town, but it did make plenty of trouble and danger for Jimmie Little, the zealot.

He had not driven very far when, at a prominent saloon corner, a mob of roughneck, drunken bullies surged out to mop him up. With many loud curses, horrible blackguarding and dire threats, which they were drunk and desperate enough to carry out, the crowd pulled Jimmie Little in all directions, as he held on to the buggy

with all his strength. In another minute he would have been seriously injured, if not killed.

Baxter McLendon happened along, saw the excitement in the middle of the street and asked what it meant. Somebody told him profanely. Baxter pushed his way to the side of the old preacher and tried to reason with the crowd not to molest the old man. The toughs paid no attention whatever and continued to harry their quarry.

Suddenly they were looking down the barrel of a .45-gun which moved from side to side but did not waver, and the freezing cold voice of Baxter McLendon was chilling their blood and saying:

"The first man that lays his hand on this old fellow I'm going to kill. He's the only decent man I've seen since I've been in town."

In amazement they asked why he was defending such a blankety blank old blankety blank and what he meant. Baxter told them he meant precisely what he said. The mob continued to growl, not only at the old preacher, but at one of themselves who was fighting for their enemy, but they did not rush again. Baxter held them off with his gun for awhile, and then he climbed up into the buggy beside old Jimmie Little and told the preacher to drive on.

And the zealous, if impractical, reformer drove the horse with the placarded covering through every street in that turbulent town that day, with Baxter McLendon and his six-gun convoying him on the same buggy seat. The dirty saloons did not go, but the preacher and his placards did go wherever he pleased, thanks to the best gambler in town, named Baxter McLendon.

Another trait in Baxter McLendon is illustrated by the fact that it was all a mere incident to him and as such

was forgotten within a few years. Its sequel occurred in Sanford, North Carolina, one night when just as the evangelist was about to start his sermon an old man, whom Baxter did not recognise, walked down the aisle and asked to be allowed to say a few words. It was Jimmie Little, "come a hundred and fifty miles today to see this man that saved my life." He told the story of the placarded horse and buggy, the mob, his unexpected champion arriving in the nick of time with a big revolver, and of their triumphant ride up and down the streets together after the toughs had been repulsed.

Jimmie Little had his heart in that narrative, and he told it dramatically and well. The immense crowd cheered and laughed between tears and shouted to listen breathlessly and cheer again, and Jimmie Little never made such a hit with any sermon he ever preached. In 1926, years later, when the newspapers carried dispatches that Baxter McLendon was dangerously sick, Jimmie Little's son read the news away up in Minnesota and took the first train for Bennettsville, South Carolina. He said he was taking no chances on being able to see the man who had saved his father from a drunken mob.

In that episode concerning Jimmie Little in that wicked town is epitomised several chapters in the life of Baxter F. McLendon growing out of marked traits in his permanent character.

There was that urge to help the under dog, whatever kind of dog it happens to be, pedigreed or cur, impulsively and quickly, and to make the help efficient.

There was that habit of making new friends by his own friendliness toward others which still persists—although Jimmie Little and his son took more pains to express their appreciation than most folks do.

There was the courage inate in him from his com-

bined Scotch bravery and his Irish recklessness, both placed in him with the blood of his ancestry and hence to be in him always.

There was that instinct for leadership so prominent in him in middle age; there it caused him to take charge of the affair; now it is exemplified in campaigns for bettering the condition of South Carolina school children and for big revivals.

There was that tendency to complete whatever he starts; not content with rescuing Jimmie Little, he saw to it that the reformer's right to drive in the streets, even with a placarded horse, was made secure—with a six-gun.

Other permanent traits are to be found in that defiance of a mob of his own kind of men—but perhaps dominant over all the rest was a certain conscience—or determination to set a limit for the evil in himself—shown in several incidents of the days he spent in Florida.

That wild and carefree life was ended by the decree of a doctor who told him his lungs and life depended upon a change of life and environment. He sold his saloon and arranged to go back to Bennettsville to live. For a livelihood, and for a change, he decided to be a barber. Characteristically of his way of always making complete preparations before doing anything new, he went to New York City to attend a barber school for its complete course, before opening a shop in his old home town. He further made sure of his ability as a barber before using the razor on his own townsmen by operating a shop in Wadesboro, North Carolina, for several months immediately after his graduation from the New York school for barbers.

The new barber shop in itself is not of much importance to the biographer of Baxter F. McLendon, but the section of his life to be called the barber shop days is full

of interest on account of its forecast of the future by the emphasis it places on certain traits in his character which were fixed by this time; he had grown past the age of easy change in habits, had a good wife, and might be considered to have settled into the form he was to maintain until he died. That form of manhood was not a very admirable one in its morality; but it did show elements of real manhood of considerable power; it was less volatile than during the preceding years, and the young man was far less wild than previously; the change in his reputation was that he was considered not so devilishly wicked, but hardly less undesirable as an associate for the sons of parents who were ambitious for their offspring—but as usual most people felt friendly toward him and wished more for his reform than for his indictment or arrest.

"He was the best barber ever in Bennettsville," is the verdict yet, a quarter of a century later; "his hand was soft as a woman's, and after he shaved you, your face was as smooth as a baby's." That is not surprising, for it will be noticed that he was among the very best in everything he undertook to do. It is characteristic of his thoroughness also, that he imported from Belgium the very best oilstone, and when he honed his razors he inspected the cutting edge with a microscope he bought for the purpose. In the beginning he had a very smart shop, and a little later he bought the best and finest furnishings obtainable, and was reputed to have the best and finest barber shop in the whole state. That barber shop and its methods of excelling competition are very characteristic of its owner in all stages of his development and all eras of his life.

That shop in the evenings, with its window shades closed tight was a very convenient camouflage for a gambling room. The rear of the shop had plenty of room for

several tables and accommodations for all the players likely to come in a town of that size. Its owner did not make a typically professional house out of it; the tables had no slot in the center, and there was no rake-off for the proprietor; but it was a place where men who liked to play poker could be accommodated comfortably and within any reasonable limit. Many of its patrons came over from the hotel and were travelers in town for the night, but the local gentry often dropped in to try to fill a flush or capture another king in the draw. Some pretty stiff games were played there of nights; there were cotton barons in town and on the neighboring plantations who played sometimes with several thousand dollars in the pot, but stakes seldom ran that high; as a rule the traveling men played for higher stakes than the local people. Baxter was always acquiescent to boosting the limit, for he was sure to win most of the time.

Everybody who knows a full house when he sees it knows that the keenest and deepest analysis of character may be made across the green baize table, and that successful poker playing requires qualities and intelligence allied to that found in successful men in all vocations. The way Baxter McLendon played poker in those olden days deserves study because of the insight it gives into the best traits hidden in him—and the basic traits of those days were bound to be permanent ones.

He studied hard—that it happened to be the mathematics and psychology of poker did not make it any the less applied science nor detract from the significance of the hard work. And one part of that study was the deep mathematics called the doctrine of probabilities. He put a comparative value on his own hands, not by impulse, by a loose estimate, nor by any superstitious notion; he memorised the precise ratio of chances resident in each

hand as calculated by a certain English mathematician named Hoyle who wrote one of the earliest of best sellers. He bet according to the mathematical doctrine of probabilities uniformly—precisely what his hand was worth in the argot of the great American game—and that he did this uniformly is of great value to the student of his traits of character, for few men have that much persistency in thrusting aside other influences than good judgment.

In poker all values are comparative, and it is necessary to know what one's opponents have as well as the cards in one's own hand, in order to calculate the actual value of the five cards one possesses. To acertain the value of the hand across the table, carefully bunched and often without the smallest corner showing outside a broad palm requires the most acute and careful operation of an exact applied psychology. Baxter studied that, too, in the only place it can be studied, the psychological laboratory—his laboratory was a mobile one, sometimes in a Largo, Florida hotel dive, sometimes before a street corner barker, anywhere and everywhere he had happened to be gambling or selling goods. He studied this as hard and thoroughly as he always studied anything to which he applied himself.

Poker players know that in the long run and consistently the combination of betting only what one's hand is worth and being able to tell how good a hand the other fellow has, wins the money. One need not to be a poker player to know that intelligence devoted to hard study of the deeper mathematics and psychology marks a man who will win the rewards of success in whatever sort of work he does—even if this be as far removed from opening a jackpot as in preaching the true gospel and becoming an evangelist. The intellectual embryo of the

very successful evangelist Baxter F. McLendon is plainly visible in the rear of that barber shop at the poker table.

In playing poker there, while he was sinful and immersed in vice, and a danger to the community, and altogether sordid, yet as a matter of fact he was considerably in harmony with his environment and no better nor worse than any other man in that community who also played poker a great deal. Poker then and there was looked upon as an interesting amusement and relaxation for gentlemen; it was as respectable and clean as horse trading in Missouri, or peddling in Connecticut. The difference between Baxter McLendon and the other men there was that the others were satisfied with a social session or two a week, and Baxter made gambling a vocation and wanted to play every night.

"He was the best poker player here and he was good—I mean good"—with an emphasis on the last word which suggested that the speaker was qualified to judge and had peculiar reason to remember the fact—that is the verdict given many years after those night sessions around the table in the rear of that barber shop. It is a tribute of excellence to superiority; it is a heartfelt recognition of the ability of a victor given by a vanquished man. It is also one of many proofs of the fact that Baxter McLendon excelled in every single thing he ever undertook seriously to do.

"He always played as straight as a string with his friends and never was suspected of any crooked work in our games," this expert witness continues, "but if some card sharp wandered in, Baxter would detect him first and then proceed to slaughter him. Baxter had learned a right smart of the tricks of crooked gamblers and could do enough of them to hold his own against any crook that ever came to this town. Sometimes he would

entertain us by telling us in advance what hands he was going to deal each of us and then doing it so we couldn't detect anything out of the way, although we watched him closely; he liked to mystify us in that way, but he never dealt crooked when playing with his friends in our games."

Two elements in the condition described by the old-timer of Bennettsville merit comment and attention: Baxter never cheated his friends and only fooled those who started to cheat him first; when he did stoop to conquer some visiting card sharp, he always was the victor. The first was part of that loyalty to his friends which must have a whole chapter for itself in any biography of him; the second is another of many of the proofs that whenever he did anything, he did it thoroughly.

Now putting poker decks on ice, reading pin pricks in the corners of the backs of the card, trimming side edges microscopically to force the cut, placing a picture as the fourth, eighth, twelfth, and sixteenth card in the deck after it is shuffled and cut, pulling a needed card from the middle of the deck without discovery, and even the kindergarten amusement of dealing from the bottom of the deck, are all of them acquired arts and not natural aptitudes. In accordance with the trait seen so constantly in him, when he began to play poker, he assiduously learned all about it. Early in that phase of his career, he looked up some skillful professionals and quizzed them and watched them show him how it was done—and then he practiced for hours at a stretch for days at a time on each trick until he was more adept at it than his preceptors. That was his way of doing things, by ample preparation, and he did it in playing poker, as well as in everything else.

As at different times he was the best photograph can-

vasser, the best book salesman, the best student of history in a Methodist college, the best in his class at business college, the best cotton weigher, the best bookkeeper in a Florida town, and the best barber in Bennettsville, so he was the best poker player when he made a vocation of playing poker. And in the game where so much dishonest art is found, he played square with his friends, while capable of defending himself against crooks.

But being the best barber and best poker player in Bennettsville were only the minor exhibitions of the characteristics of the wild young man—and be it said emphatically that while he was wild, he was never mean; while he was rather unmoral, he never descended to petty vices; while his drinking and gambling should not be emulated by anybody, young or old, there were at the same time other things in him more important, and more permanent, because they were a component part of his being and not merely accretions collected in the previous years of sailing the high seas of life, as ships collect undesirable barnacles while their engines and propellers function perfectly and their cabins retain the beauty built into them originally. These other things were as strongly marked as the drinking and gambling—perhaps more so, for they seem to be remembered many years after by more people of that town than recall the drawn curtains of the barber shop of evenings.

"He was always for the under dog—and he always did something about it," a professional man says with marked emphasis on the fact that Baxter McLendon not only sympathised with, but always helped the unfortunate. There is abundant evidence of this still in Bennettsville. And there is no doubt that every word of that statement should have its full weight and meaning.

He sympathised and he helped, and he always helped whoever asked his aid; moreover it did not need a request to obtain his assistance, for whenever or wherever he saw an under dog, a man being whipped by fate, he instantly entered the case and tried hard to alleviate whatever distress of any kind he saw.

"He was simply a sucker for anybody who wanted to bleed him for money. When he had money, the leeches took it away from him easier than anybody took candy from a baby, and the professional beggar at the door would blush to use some of the means and tales amateurs put over on him to get money." Thus saith the Bennettsville people of that era, and the statement is correct while the implication is entirely erroneous. The leeches got his money, not because he did not know they were generally lying, but because he had a horror of possibly refusing somebody aid that was vitally needed. He was not the easy mark they said he was, but a young gambler and bootlegger whose strongest motive was to help any dog who happened to be underneath just then. He would rather be gypped by the ninety and nine whining frauds than to repulse the one honest and submerged man with real trouble, who might possibly be among the crowd surrounding him with outstretched hands. He wanted to be sure that he did not miss even one deserving poor man. And this urge was the most compelling thing in his character then, as it is to be seen in him yet. The Bennettsville folks tell it thus:

"If he were going down to the bank to pay a note, and somebody met him and told him the right kind of a story, Baxter would give the fellow five hundred dollars and go on down to the bank and renew the note—or stave them off until he got some more money and reached the bank with it before being tapped on the sympathetic nerve for it."

It is noteworthy, as one meanders over that town, leading old-settlers to talk about Baxter McLendon, that fifty men will tell paraphrases of that last paragraph for every one who will mention his gambling or his drinking. The biggest idea he had and used most then seems to be the same that the Englishman Booth made the central thought of the Salvation Army—and he was his own army corps all by himself, helping people cast down, distributing money for sustenance and sickness and financing the work in that South Carolina town out of his own pocket. The striking difference is, that the Salvation Army investigates and hunts for real needs to relieve, while Baxter McLendon poured out money without investigation and very often indeed gave money when he should have given reproof or other advice. Legends still extant in Bennettsville indicate that any pitiable tale would pick his pocket clean, as those big electro-magnets pick up scrap iron from a sorting table.

Even while his townspeople laughed at the victim of the leeches, they had deeper behind their grins a very sincere respect for the brotherly love they knew to be the foundation of that foolishness. They thought he was often fooled, but they also knew he never had any secret schemes up his own sleeve, but was always sincere in all his endeavors. So, when he occasionally asked good people to follow him in a movement, they often did so. Gratitude in those to whom he gave money, either sincere or that gratitude which has been called a lively sense of favors yet to come, prompted the recipients of his greenbacks to accede to his own requests. Then there was his own personal charm which has always been marked.

These things and others gave him certain qualities for leadership, and he was a leader of considerable power to get things done. It is such things as those mentioned in

the last paragraph that put the most votes in the ballot boxes, as Tammany has demonstrated for generations. They are things inherent in Baxter F. McLendon and not limited to the barber shop period of his life, and they made him a political factor before he opened his barber shop in Bennettsville, but in the barber shop days he was getting more and more into politics. He usually laid and carried out his own plans—as when, unknown to his candidate, he packed the court house full at a joint speaking of two candidates for the state senate to applaud his friend to the echo and heckle the other orator off the platform. It can not be gainsaid that he was a leader of men, the captain of companies he raised himself to fight for his friends.

The portrait of the Bennettsville barber must be drawn as the best poker player, hard whiskey drinker, bootlegger, who was wild partly because so susceptible to influences, yet a leader of men of considerable force; never mean, but always adventurous; giving not a tithe, but nine-tenths of his daily receipts to those who told him they were poor; exuding brotherly love to an extent that made people laugh; plunging into fights that were not his concern to help the under dog; not merely talking sympathetically, but always doing helpful things; a man without fear and scorning reproach; an enigma to his fellow townsmen who told their sons not to associate with him, while they felt a surprising and deep regard for him and wished they could direct his great energy into other and better channels. That was the young man who was led across lots to a tabernacle and the cataclysm of his conversion.

In the light of his forbears and early training, the conversion of Baxter McLendon was a natural and entirely logical event. To himself, it was and is a miracle, intense drama, something above and beyond the experiences of anybody else.

In a sense it was a miracle; it had certain dramatic elements; the same thing can be said of each and every conversion. This one was not so different in itself as in its subject. It was a prolonged tornado whirling and twisting through the uttermost depths of a being with very great capacity for feeling. That capacity for feeling, which varies so much in different persons, is not sufficiently recognised as a factor in many things by brain physiologists and students of mankind. The fact that Baxter McLendon not only has always had the sensitiveness of the surface of an eyeball, but also a capacity to feel that greatly magnifies in him pleasure, pain, each and every emotion, imagination and prejudices, affection, appreciation and drama, must be kept in mind in any study of this man.

With this capacity for feeling, he has told in a sermon to many audiences all about his conversion—as he felt it and sees it. Since he constantly dramatises everything, himself and events large and small, everywhere, at his own table in casual conversation as well as in his strenuous oratory in the pulpit, he has made a strong drama out of that sermon. Since he has preached it in his home town where everybody had been cognizant of the affair, it must be practically correct as a narrative. But certainly, to give it dramatic force, he in it pictures him-

self as a much worse man than he ever was in his sinful days.

In fact, he never was a mean man, nor a more wicked man than hundreds of other citizens of his native county always held in high esteem. But when the deep emotions sternly repressed by his childhood did burst out and there came one of those emotional storms like that which caused the shooting of another bootlegger, he was a dangerous man because passions kept repressed do the most damage when the flood breaks through the dam. He had potentialities, rather than actualities, that might, and perhaps would, have become criminal in later life; and while the pecadilloes of others were more or less concealed, his sinfulness and lawlessness were shouted from the forum of public opinion, and he was one of few men whose reputation is worse than his character.

He drank red liquor consistently, but no more than many a Southern gentleman; he played poker for as high a limit as his purse could reach, but necessarially with other men who happened to be of the aristocracy of Bennettsville as a rule; he violated the state prohibition law of that day by selling whisky, and so did the men of high standing who bought it from him; he was, always, entirely guiltless of dallying with the third member of the triumvirate credited with the ruination of men, and whatever tribute he paid to wine and gambling, he never trod the primrose path with women, in which he was one item better than some other citizens who were never held up as being superlatively sinful. That he paints himself as superlatively sinful, before his conversion, is only one instance among a thousand that trait which knows only the superlative in description; and there is more powerful drama in his own story, because dramatising is something he could not avoid if he tried.

True, he was the antithesis of a pious christian for some years before that time a couple of traveling evangelists raised a tent in Bennettsville. He had not been to church for six years except once when his wife, in her home community, persuaded him to go to meeting with her, and he did it to please her and slept through the latter half of the sermon. Actually, like most boys, he resented any effort to reform him. When a friend told him of a conversation with his mother in tears of despair at his ever turning into the straight and narrow path, even at the coming revival, he became angry. He put any thought of the meeting out of his mind, as usual, and went on his routine, poker playing, bootlegging way.

The tent was erected down town, about a block from his barber shop, convenient but almost unnoticed by the barber-bootlegger. That evening at 8 o'clock, when the barber shop door was closed and the curtains drawn tight, it chanced that nobody was there to sit at the poker table, and so for awhile Baxter waited patiently for the arrival of somebody anxious to fill a flush or otherwise contest the relative value of five cards. Nobody came. The atmosphere of the closed shop was as calm as a still summer afternoon an hour before a giant, black, funnel shaped twister sweeps in from the southwest and tears up the landscape. The quietude became irksome to the young man. He decided to go out and hunt up some poker players. The whole town was quiet that evening, and the only attraction was the revival tent which was still a novelty with all sorts of possibilities of entertainment. The poker players might be there. He would go there and signal out of the audience any he might find and thus get a game. Leaving the light burning in his shop, and the door unlocked for any belated arrival, he sauntered in to the street and continued over to the tent.

Naturally, he sat on a rear seat, and he devoted himself entirely to scanning the audience for somebody of his own kind, and enough of such men to fill at least four sides of the table in his shop. There were one or two who might be drafted in a pinch to fill the table, but poker players in that tent were scarce as alligators in North Dakota. The services and sermon glanced off his consciousness like a zephyr blowing on a brick wall. With his innate intensity of concentration his mind was occupied entirely in his search for opponents at poker. The sermon ended, and the call for penitents followed unnoticed by the seacher for his fellows.

His attention was attracted from his census of the audience by the sight of a young preacher pushing his way through the crowd, parting the people and walking on the backs of the seats directly toward him. The young preacher stopped before the young barber, and the two stared at each other unflinchingly. The preacher saw a handsome young man with a cold poker face, and eyes that have always dominated his whole appearance, piercing as a shaft of light, shining black, blazing in the middle of his face, as unwavering as the sun itself, absolutely fearless in their steady gaze into the preacher's own eyes. Baxter McLendon saw a face full of determination and self reliance, with eyes that were observing but soft enough to make their staring almost a caress; it was the voice, when the preacher finally spoke, that impressed him even more than the calm, gentle face, for the tone contained all of friendliness and tenderness as the preacher said:

"Young man, a man that looks like you and has the appearance that you have—the devil is doing dirt with him in this country."

It is notable that Baxter McLendon was the only per-

son spoken to that night by that young preacher in that tent. The preacher said years afterward that he himself can not understand why that should be, unless it was a guidance direct from God. Some people noticed the fact when the preacher went back to the platform and they commented upon it.

It is still more notable that the words that preacher addressed to Baxter McLendon was the most effective sentence possible to construct for its purpose; that one sentence contains meanings, and connotations and implications that are precisely the things that influence Baxter McLendon, then, now, and always, as the careful student of the details of his mental characteristics will see by analysing the remark of the preacher. Without stopping here for that, one may call attention to how the words brought to the surface that old, permanent suggestion of a boy equal to the best but badly treated by society and his environment; they furnished a definite thing doing him dirt; they turned that resentful antagonism toward the devil—an antagonism that was the only near approach to hate in boy and man, ever.

Those words turned up the subsoil of feeling that had become pretty well covered with silt in the interval since boyhood days on the plantation when it was nearly all of that boy; they produced a turmoil that he had not felt for years; they reached to the bottommost depths of his nature and prodded there the oldtime elements into oldtime activity—much more, and other things of course, but that is one of the lines of force in the single sentence that preacher spoke to Baxter McLendon that night.

The preacher could not have framed that effective sentence by any special purpose to make it especially effective; he could not have known about the boyhood stresses; at the time, he could not guess that his single

shot had hit in the center of a magazine of high explosive; but his artillery was so well aimed, that only that one shot was necessary to cause the forces of evil to evacuate the heart and soul of Baxter McLendon, finally, although the siege occupied seventeen days.

The rest of that night was a painful one to the young man. He went home and to a bed on which he tossed in restless wakefulness. Sometimes that night he vowed that he would never go to church again and take chances on being so stirred that he could not sleep. Sometimes he made a memory inventory of the sins he had committed. He longed for morning, sometimes audibly, and his wife, curious about the cause of his insomnia, feared he had committed some crime which had got him into deep trouble. He got up several times and took a big drink from the bottle he kept in a bedroom closet. By morning, he was both nervous and drunk.

At the barber shop he swore lustily at his employees, and alternated that with walking the street cursing himself for going to that tent meeting. And while he had not been attentive to the sermon there, the announcements which came after that explosive sentence hurled at him by the preacher kept ringing in his mind like the resonant pealing of a big bell: "Song service at ten thirty; preaching at eleven o'clock." Over and over it sounded in his mind, sonorously and almost rythmically, its very overtones compelling and its message one that pulled him toward the tent. And at eleven o'clock he was slouching low down in a rear seat of that tent, inconspicuous he hoped, in a large audience. But the preacher had only a minor part of the attention of his auditors at that service. They had never before seen Baxter McLendon at church—it seemed incongruous to connect him with any means of grace. People in the seats whispered

to one another continually, stretching their necks to see Baxter McLendon over the heads of their neighbors, and every person there looked in his direction at some time during the sermon. Baxter was uncomfortable and muttered to himself:

"If I knew I'd cause all this excitement, I wouldn't have come!"

The preacher put his utmost efforts into the sermon delivered against so strong a counter attraction as Baxer McLendon in a rear seat, and finally reached its end and asked anybody tired of sin to come to the altar.

An explosion in Baxter McLendon's ego blew him up to the improvised altar, over an upturned chair, unconscious of what he was doing, and deposited him like a dud at the front of the platform. He was drunk, perceptibly drunk. Both the minister who knelt beside him at the altar and his town associates could easily see that. The minister knew that some men are more competent drunk than sober and talked to him about salvation; the town gang said to one another that it was a shame for Baxter to get drunk and disturb a religious meeting. For during the quarter hour that Baxter knelt there by the edge of the platform the news went all over town with the rapidity known only to really sensational news in a small town that Baxter McLendon was at the altar in the tent. Nearly everybody knew it, but it was after he had gone home to dinner at noon that his wife heard it from a neighbor woman.

He slipped into his home while his wife was busy between the kitchen and the dining room. While she was at the kitchen end of her round trip, he took from his pocket and threw out the window into the weeds a pair of dice adapted to shooting craps. Just after the

two had begun dinner, the neighbor arrived full of her news.

Mrs. Rena McLendon had all the uncanny wisdom of womankind about men. Especially did she know the man eating so busily as not to look at her. She had a full realization that she had a problem full of dynamite to deal with where a mistake would be far more than a crime. All the blood left her face; tears rolled silently down her white cheeks; her lips quivered and twitched; but she kept control of herself and her management of her man, and she said very quietly only one sentence: "Baxter, come home soon tonight, and I'll go with you." She did not spoil a satisfactory situation by too much talk, nor make any attempt to guide a tornado. That night, when he came home early so she could go to the revival with him, all she said was: "All right, Baxter, let's go." But she took his arm and at the tent she marched him quickly down the aisle to a front seat!

It was a conspicuous seat, whoever occupied it, and trebly so when Baxter McLendon sat in it. But during the afternoon, he had become somewhat accustomed to the spotlight of attention. From habit he went from dinner to his barber shop, and when he entered its door, both the barbers had customers in the chairs, and along the wall sat even men who had been shaved once that day. He sat down and held a paper before his face, but all eyes remained on him. Many men came in pretending to be looking for somebody in that barber shop, and really for a look at Baxter McLendon. They would walk over to one side to see around his newspaper. Some would peep surreptitiously, and some would stare openly. Some would stay for repeated looks, and some would leave at once after a prolonged gaze. Nothing of such general and intense interest had occured in that town

since one of the raiding Sherman's generals had his headquarters there for two or three days. So, Baxter had become accustomed to the spotlight by the time his wife placed him in that prominent front seat for the night meeting.

He went to the altar again that night, and at their own door his wife gave him her first praise and encouragement in words. He took off the revolver he habitually carried, like everybody else in that community, and told her he would never carry a gun again. She recognised it as a work and sacrifice of real repentence, she threw her arms around his neck and told him she knew he meant it in earnest.

His advance towards conversion was a veritable pilgrim's progress. The first day he had thrown away his crap utensils, and that night he renounced his revolver. It took three days, with fighting at the altar at every opportunity, for him to discard his poker games. Several days afterward his game chickens were let out of his life, followed some days later by his bull dogs which of course were the best fighters in the state. Before either the fighting cocks or dogs went out of his life, the ministers were put to their mettle to meet his arguments that there could be no sin in the amusements of the game pit—he argued that the only possible use of a game chicken or a bull dog was to fight, and hence God must have intended them for fighting—and how could there be harm or sin in fighting either of them, when God had made the fighting so enjoyable to man! And the gamecocks and bulldogs set mankind such a good example in courage and inability to give up!

Giving up his old associations was to all that, however, as tearing out one's heart is to taking a thorn out of a finger. That was not taking off an excresence that had

grown like a cancer, but was tearing one of his very strongest traits out by the roots. In another chapter is treated his relations to friendship, because they are worthy of so much study, and there is some description of what this phase of his progress into christianity meant to him. But he finally was able to differentiate between bad associations and benevolent friendship for persons who had been his associates, and he made clear his love for them as men, while he broke with them as influences.

And so he progressed step by step for seventeen days and seventeen nights of the revival. He had all the encouragement his family could give him. Every minute he was at the altar, either his wife, his father, or his mother, had an arm around his shoulders with words of encouragement to him and prayer to God. The townspeople also were much interested in his case, but most of them considered him an enigma—as he was and is to most of his acquaintances—and were careful about the adage of the cooks and the broth. Everybody recognised the crisis in a life. It was really that. Every student of Baxter McLendon must feel that, if he had not been turned to the right fork of the road, the other fork would have taken him to criminality of more than commonplace type. The sheriff told the evangelist one day that he hoped the church people would succeed in getting Baxter saved, for he considered Baxter McLendon the most dangerous man in Marlboro county—a recognition of the terrific potentialities in him when one of those explosions of enmity occured—but that if Baxter should be converted from his evil ways and associations, he would be a power for good. The remark is representative of public opinion and public sentiment during those seventeen days of travail. That universal public interest in the conversion of a man is almost if not quite unique.

The last service of that revival was being held in the tent. It drew to its end. After the sermon, song followed song to prolong the meeting—for Baxter McLendon was not yet converted. He was arguing to himself that upon the return of the revivalists the next year, he would be in better shape financially to give up his profitable sinning. The chorus of the last song ceased. He left the altar and started out of the tent with his brave wife by his side, his parents nearly heartbroken, the ministers deeply discouraged, the populace disappointed.

Then a little woman rang the bell of the target they all were trying to hit, as in the beginning a man had started so much with a single sentence. That woman struck deep into the ego of the youth and stirred that most powerful obsession which had ruled him for thirteen years—the call to preach.

Her suggestion raised into its throne again that call to preach and all that it applied. For thirteen years it had been suppressed, but had refused to be buried altogether. It resumed all its power over the young man under the most stimulating circumstances; in that tent for seventeen days there had been preparations for its coronation. This time it seated itself in his mind as a present reality, and not a future happening. The little woman of the congregation had given him the final push across the line, but it was very fitting that his first announcement should be made to his wife in these words: "The work has been done." She was overjoyed, and his mother gave free rein to the expression of her happiness; his taciturn father's face lighted up more than it had ever done before.

The people, saints and sinners alike, rejoiced after the fashion of Americans jubilating. That audience acted like college students whose football star had defeated the

hated rival; it carried Baxter on its shoulders while it shouted religious instead of college yells.

The next morning he was praised sincerely by the sheriff who rushed up to him in the street and exclaimed, "I congratulate you; God bless you!" as he clasped the hand of the new convert. The next man he met that morning was the chief of police who was equally sincere and emphatic in his congratulations. Baxter was on his way to the office of the prosecuting attorney of Marlboro county, whom he found he no longer hated, to tell the prosecutor he wanted to settle up all the old scores the law had chalked up against him. The prosecuting attorney told him not to bother about the past and that the cases against him would be all dismissed in court. All the people made it plain they were glad; a little later they were to prove it tangibly.

The new convert began at once to explore the new world into which he had been reborn. The only scripture he knew then was one of the shorter verses of seven words. His method of studying the Bible correlates perfectly with his methods of study of everything else, detailed in the chapter telling of his later education. He got a number of pencils of different colors and made a Bible look like a kaleidoscope pattern. He found he had lost somewhat his really remarkable memory, as he undertook to memorise the whole new testament in a few weeks; he did memorise a verse at a time, and after awhile exercise increased the efficiency of his memory until it was about as good as ever. He set himself to learn the scriptures, for he then thought that was all he needed to preach the gospel. How he learned differently and developed into the preacher he is now is another story.

It would be difficult to find a more impressive instance in biography or history of determination achieving a fixed purpose over greater obstacles than the spectacle of Baxter F. McLendon making himself into a preacher of the highest rank as a saver of souls.

It required years of hardships, hurdling obstacles and obstinate struggling. It had its Valley Forge, its battle of Long Island, and its campaign across the Delaware, but it also had its Yorktown.

He has told the story to numerous audiences from his own point of view, but it is even more interesting to look at the drama from the viewpoint of the community of his home town.

In that community, the barber who had been gambling, bootlegging and sowing wild oats abundantly had been converted. There was the first surprise, and always the genuine interest in his change of heart. This interest was chiefly christian philanthropy, but it had also an element not entirely altruistic. The leadership of the young man had been recognised, and it was the real leadership that he has always exerted in whatever environment; hence, it was naturally believed, however erroneously, that the sinfulness of all the other men with whom he associated was due to him and his influence, and that each of the others was a good youth lead astray by the wicked barber. That was not at all true, and the fact is that Baxter McLendon was influenced by his associates far more than he influenced them toward vice. But the community had its own opinion about that.

As soon as the first jubilation that night over his conversion had time to more calmly consider the situation,

the people began to think how the new asset of christianity might be utilised to best advantage. The consensus of opinion was that the new life he would lead would be an example to his old associates, and his new conversation with them would persuade them, or most of them, to follow in his footsteps to the altar and into the church.

The sinners, equally with the saints, desired to help him. The sinners have seldom been given credit for a trait they have which leads them usually, everywhere, to help, rather than to hinder, the determination of an associate to lead a better life. And in Bennettsville, everybody, saints and sinners alike, wanted to help especially Baxter McLendon. People have generally had that desire to aid him, throughout his life and everywhere—it is a reward for some good qualities in the man that have been apparent to everybody since he was a small boy. Certainly the Bennettsville people, who knew him longest and best, had that desire, and the day after his conversion, it appeared prominently in many ways and from many persons.

So the atmosphere of his home town was warm with friendliness and hope for his usefulness as an influence for good, and it was also bracing with latent and expressed helpfulness.

There was no difference of opinion about the methods most practical and applicable to the case. The young man must be assured a comfortable living by his work, and everybody should become his customers to indicate their partisanship on his side against any who might wickedly give him the cold shoulder. Then the thought obtruded that it would be easier for him to live the new life, if he cut loose entirely from the old routine, and especially that barber shop of unfragrant odor in the nostrils of the churchmen; putting him into another vocation might be

good policy, and he was an excellent bookkeeper for one thing. That good community had it all settled for itself by the time breakfast was over that next morning after the conversion of Baxter McLendon. This fact places Bennettsville on a high plane and makes it worthy of much praise.

The town did not know much about that strongest, miraculously powerful call to preach which had been for thirteen years enthroned as the monarch of his mind and dominating him as thoroughly as any absolute monarchy was ever governed by any potentate.

It was soon to learn what and where the superior force was, and to adapt itself to the new conditions with a new arrangement of its own forces of helpfulness and utilization of the recent convert.

The call to preach and the conversion had as a corrolary a faith that Baxter McLendon depended upon to move mountains—a faith that recognised no impossibilities for God. He at once adopted for his golden text: "For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, so that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." And he believed that so strongly that to him it was as much a fact as the declaration in the almanac that there would be a full moon on a certain date.

Thus the Bennettsville stage was set with opposing forces in action, plot and counterplot, tragedy and comedy, and all the elements of real drama.

The curtain that next morning rose on a street scene. The new convert and a church pastor entered from opposite sides and met. Some rumor of the barber's intention to preach had leaked out, and the minister mentioned hearing it.

"Yes, sir," Baxter replied, "after careful consideration and long thinking about it, I'm going to preach."

"Aren't you making a mistake? Aren't you too old?" the kindly pastor suggested with some surprise in his voice.

"No; I'm not making any mistake; I've heard from headquarters, and I'm going to follow God's lead and what He told me." And before the good minister could find his voice again to argue with the zealous but foolish young man, the latter had walked on down the street.

The next scene is a judge's office, into which the young man enters and finds seated the pastor of the judge showing in every line of his face and every shiny place on his clothing the marks of the hard work, cares and privations that even a minister with much training for his calling must endure.

This minister presented another angle of view by including the selling of the barber shop and business in his question whether the new convert intended to preach. When he received an affirmative answer, his mind saw bridges burned in one's rear as a reckless youth starts on a road with the windings and roughness of which he was familiar. Then he introduced still another element of importance in the profession of the cloth by a question about Baxter's wife and her qualifications to be a preacher's wife. Also, he emphasised the young man's lack of education by a few questions. In a few minutes he made it clear that being a preacher is not so simple thing as being a barber or a bookkeeper. The only effect on Baxter McLendon was to bring the retort that such trivialities as education and lack of income were not to be considered, and he was going to preach. The minister was a little dazed, but impressed by such determination and faith he said he could not advise such a man—with

the implication that the young man was beyond understanding.

Before the day was over, the town was talking about the intention of Baxter McLendon to preach with almost as much interest as it had discussed his conversion. It had ceased to wonder, however, for successive events had paralysed surprise. Youth could not be depended upon to follow the advice of experience, and the ministers had failed, but the hard sense of business men might be more effective. So, some friends who were merchants accosted the young man on the topic of town talk. Less serious than the ministers, they were laughing at the idea of that barber preaching and they frankly told him so.

One of them remarked that Baxter could not express himself! In the better light we have years later, that objection excites convulsions of laughter now. The laughter then had another object, for that merchant went on to say to the young man:

"Everybody is laughing at you thinking you can be a preacher. You're the joke of the town! I always thought you had some sense, but you've let your wishes run away with your brains. And the brain you have, after batting around like you have for years, can't learn enough to make a preacher anyhow."

Then came the other element in the program for helping the young man, as that merchant went on to say:

"Now, you get all that foolishness out of your head, and if you want to quit the barber business, sell out and come in and keep books for me, and I'll give you a good salary." The figure he named was a high salary, for all those people were in earnest in trying to help.

Another man stopped Baxter to transmit the offer of the congressman from that district to place the young

man in a job at Washington. The well meaning men trying their best to assist the young man they liked and the convert they felt needed aid, talked it over as they met after they had been repulsed politely but emphatically and informed very pointedly that the youth was going to preach and there was nothing else to talk about. They shook their heads as they discussed his plan, after they quit laughing at it. One after another they tried from different angles of view to do something to divert the young man they liked so well from making a particularly conspicuous ass of himself. One after the other they reported failure to one another and wondered who might have more influence over the fellow who seemed now as foolish in his piety as he had formerly been in his vice.

Finally, others having failed, there entered that drama a Jew merchant whose name was Solomon—he was the shock troops in that combat with the queer selfwill and foolish idea of Baxter McLendon. For long, he had been the friend of the young man. He exerted himself to win his point more than he ever did to sell a bedroom suite or escape the wiles of a traveling salesman.

"Baxter, I want to tell you something," he began smilingly and ingratiatingly, with that sort of cordial seriousness possible only to the Hebrew. "You're being talked about a lot in this town, and everybody's getting a lot of fun out of your idea of being a preacher. I don't like to hear you made fun of"—then more earnestly—"Now, Baxter, you know that you haven't done anything for years except drink whisky and play poker, you've been out of school for years, and you never could get down to studying much after all you've done, if you tried. It takes study and education to make a preacher that amounts to anything. Just think about it a little.

"If you do start out to preach, you don't know how, and you'd be the poorest excuse of a preacher you ever saw. You can't get into the conference without passing an examination that you can't pass at all. All you'd ever get would be some hardscrabble church that wouldn't pay enough to keep your soul in your body, and you and your wife and children"—his tone became mellowly soft—"would suffer for clothes and something to eat. Now, you forget about this preaching business." The Hebrew merchant with a big heart went on without stopping to produce and show a better opportunity than a hardscrabble pulpit and his own sincerity in his desire to help:

"If you want to get out of the barber shop and old surroundings, sell it out as soon as you can get a good price, and I'll give you a job right here in the store, and a better job than preaching ever could be for you."

The philanthropic Hebrew friend received about the same answer as the other merchants:

"No, Sol, I'm going to preach; God called me when I was a little boy and He don't make mistakes."

That call to preach was invincible to all attacks of any kind and always, but it did not impress that Solomon who retorted with a Southern version of the story involving mistaking a call to work in the Lord's vineyard when it actually was to work in the barnyard—this one was about an ignorant negro applying for a license on the strength of seeing in the sky the letters G P C which he interpreted "Go Preach Christ", but the examiner told him they meant "Go Pick Cotton." But the story obviously to Baxter had no application to that call to preach he had received. That call was inexorably compelling the convert to preach, and he tried to make the men understand that. He paraphrased his statement

for some of them without changing its compelling meaning.

"No; I am going to preach," was its simplest form. "I may die of starvation, but we won't tell anybody and call it pneumonia or something," was one variant with a glint of humor. "God called me when I was a little boy, and He don't make mistakes," was the verbiage in reply to a close friend and earnest adviser. "I may be picking cotton before I am through, but I'm going to preach first," was the answer to the mistaken call story. "I've been thinking it over ever since I was fourteen years old, and I know that to this end I was born," was the reply to one who argued for serious thought before giving up the barber vocation.

There was no use to argue against that kind of a determination based on such a foundation, but the men could not admit even so patent a fact. Womankind, with feminine intuition, understood the situation first, and it was some women who changed the direction of the campaign of caring for Baxter McLendon. The men acquiesced and helped as asked, but without much real faith that the labor and money would not be wasted on an impossibility—the impossibility of making a preacher out of that Bennettsville barber, which was so apparent to the men, even while women unreasonably but instinctively said it might be a possibility after all.

As days ran into weeks, everybody still agreed that something ought to be done to realise something tangible for christainity out of Baxter McLendon's conversion.

It was some women who suggested that the call to preach be utilized instead of contested; and since very evidently the young man must be taught to preach before he could preach at all, that he be educated for the ministry. They began to take up a collection in the town for

that purpose. Proof positive of the friendliness of that town for Baxter McLendon is found in the way that money was raised there. Most people were asked for and gave only a dollar or two; many gave five dollars; a number of men donated fifty dollars and a few gave a hundred dollars each. The fund was soon complete and large enough to keep the new student for two years at Asbury college which specialised in training teachers of christianity.

He himself is too modest in his public statements about his work at Asbury college. He and his wife moved to Wilmore, Kentucky, the seat of the college, two months after a term began, and the new student started with the handicap of losing half a length at the post. He could not help being unhappy, any more than could a wild horse when hitched to a plow, or an Indian put to work in a sky scraper.

The routine of a college program and the working by a time schedule was excruciatingly irksome. He longed for the flat terrain and dense swamplands of his native country, and he was homesick for South Carolina which is and was no more like Kentucky than Denver is like Boston, or Louisiana is like Los Angeles. He was lonesome for people he really knew as he knew the church people and the old gang in Bennettsville who were so unlike the faculty and students and townspeople of Wilmore. To make all that worse, his wife took sick and must return to the milder winter climate of their old home in January. The young man was finding that the call to preach was taking him into sorrows and difficulties undreamed of when it had seemed so simple to mount a pulpit and take the brake off his mouth, open the spigot and begin to spout. That obsessing call was leading him over a rough and painful path, he found.

Sometimes it seemed that the obstructions were being piled mountain high in his way. Too many cooks in Bennettsville neglected the broth; collecting philanthropic subscriptions is never routine and has always an uncertain time element; with nobody to blame, and as usual, there was delay in sending the young man the money for his expenses in that college. At his end of the line, expenses were going on like clockwork, however small they were, and had to be met with some regard to time. His larder grew almost empty, some of his needs were unsatisfied, and he was financially insolvent among strangers and in a new and very different environment.

This caused real worry, and he was sick abed for three weeks. He convalesced slowly because in despair. Those were very dark days. He decided to go to the city of Lexington and back to the barber chair. He was sure of steady and rather large income at that trade, owing to his superior abilities as a barber.

But he never had any idea of the razor and scissors being anything but a temporary financial stop gap. The recurrence to a barber shop was to be only a means of making money to continue his college work. He suggests a slight youth plowing in stumps, thrown to one side and the other as the plow careens, pulling desperately sometimes to get the plow point ont of a big root—but never looking back after he put his hand to the plow. He was going to be educated to be a preacher, and in his deepest despair he never lost sight of his objective.

Walking across the campus one day, face, posture and walk all expressing his dejection, he was accosted by another student, a Scot who knew something of his story from reading it in the papers at the time of his conversion, who asked him how he was getting along. When McLendon answered that he was leaving from lack of

funds, the Scot took his hand, looked him sympathetically in the eye, and quoted to him one of the great all inclusive promises of Omnipotence to those who trust Him. The words brought McLendon back to his real self surcharged with faith in his God.

The penniless student was heartened by that recall to his permanent position of faith in his Master—and it was justified by the receipt within a few days of a remittance from his home town folks accompanied by explanations.

However rough his path became, and however discouraged he became at times, he never had any more idea of leaving the path than an old buggy horse has of leaving the road for the pasture fields alongside. One thing was definitely, inexorably fixed in his life, and had been so fixed ever since he was fourteen years old, and he was now twenty-eight.

And he worked hard at the task set him by his new teachers, despite his arguments with them, to good results. He made the highest marks in his class in ancient history for one thing—undoubtedly because he insisted on studying it in his own better way than that insisted upon by his teacher. His grades were not bad in any of his studies which included the Bible and some of what used to be called the humanities, as well as history. His remarkable memory made such studies as history easier for him, and he gradually got back into action the brain cells used years before in the mathematics of the business college in which he had taken honors.

Neither students nor faculty appreciated him, because he could not be confined to the routine, cast iron, often antiquated methods of that college. He was a swan of high and long flight in a flock of ducklings. Sometimes he had opportunity to amaze them all by something perfectly

natural and logical in him, but unseen in him by the others.

The state intercollegiate contest in debating was held there one year. A touted entry of Asbury college was at the last minute prevented from attending it. Baxter McLendon was substituted chiefly to comply with the rules and not because anybody expected him to rank higher than zero in the grading by the judges. Actually, he was the star debater of the evening, and the judges said afterward that it was McLendon who had won the state championship for Asbury.

He made a reasonably good record in the class rooms at Asbury college by the hardest kind of work done under conditions of heartache, loneliness and a sense of utter lack of harmony with his environment. He says the faculty at the end of two years told him that his restless temperament unfitted him for collegiate or ministerial work. One might remark that his thoroughness and industry in studying all about a topic unfitted him for their kind of collegiate work which was reciting what was in a textbook the teacher had learned ahead of the class. As to ministerial work, they were nearer right, since they meant the only kind of minister they knew, the pastor of a Methodist circuit. They had not yet visioned a free lance evangelist amplifying and intensifying the work of the pastors and saving souls by the tens of thousands from a platform in a big tent. In that part of their dictum they were half right; but when they told him, as he says, that he ought to go home and be a business man, they were entirely wrong, as the future has proved. All in all, their judgment was a recognition of his handicaps without sufficient appreciation of his industry, perseverance and determination to become fitted to be a preacher.

He says he had been a complete and picturesque failure

at preaching while at college, to an extent that justified the amazement of Asbury at his quality in the debating contest. Those failures at preaching seemed to him to make those two years of training discouragingly impractical and useless; but they were a very important two years to the young man and had much to do with his later successes. The crowning of a new champion pugilist is the end of long and careful training of muscle cells; so is the planting of a flag by Peary at the North pole the result of long and hard training of the body; flying over the pole is the consequence of much training of both brain cells and body cells; and that curriculum of that college trained and strengthened brain cells in that student. The hard work and continuity of efforts that Baxter McLendon put into those two years at that college were themselves more effective as training, however, than the subjects given him to study by the faculty.

There, as everywhere and always, everybody felt a desire to help him. They made his discomfort as little painful as possible. They sensed the peculiar difficulties and sorrows of the wild colt being broken and trained there and tried to alleviate them. They did what they could to keep him from becoming too lonely. They tried to make him feel less the loss of the companionship he had had at home. They did not laugh at him, probably partly because of wonder at him. When he had to send his wife home for her health, they redoubled their efforts, invited him to their homes, and Rev. L. L. Pickett, especially, took him into his own home and tried to make him feel as one of the family. Again one encounters, as throughout the life history of Baxter F. McLendon, that constant helpfulness to him of other people of whatever type and wherever he and they might be living; big blustery, selfwilled, sometimes bullying, he was not a person

naturally attracting sympathy by weakness, but even without sympathy, and sometimes with irritation at him, everybody with whom he came in contact has always felt a keen desire to aid him in some way.

And so, after two years of sorrowful experience, hard work, discouraging obstacles, kindliness from others, and lack of understanding by everybody, the youth went home with the parting message from the faculty that he would better abandon preaching for business.

And the first thing he did after arriving home was to fish for an opportunity to preach, as social climbers angle for an invitation to a week end party. At heart his home community was still as dubious of his ability to preach as the real aristocracy is of the new rich. It was merely discreet precaution that he be given a tryout at an unimportant meeting before being placed where failure would mean chagrin. So he was invited to make the principal talk at the Tuesday night prayer meeting in one church.

At last he was to preach! Not much of a sermon, true, but still a speech to a congregation in a church on a religious topic. He would at last respond to that call he had heard that night in the revival when he was a little boy. When we consider that for thirteen years the one overwhelming, dominant, constant, obtrusive idea in his mind had been that he must and would preach, we may get some appreciation of the soul stirring excitement that whirled within his inmost being for the next several days. Preparation by work was always his maxim, whether selling books, playing poker or becoming a barber. He at once after the invitation started to work on his address, speech, remarks—doubtless he felt it to be a sermon. He made a syllabus of his chosen theme, thought up some striking sentences, memorised some pertinent verses of

scripture, worked out his slender argument and polished up his strong persuasive appeal. He was a very busy young man between the invitation and Tuesday night.

The fateful hour came, when a new preacher was to be born, a new Savonarola appear in South Carolina. The audience was expectant and curious and hence attentive at first. In it was his pious, proud father, and this fact gave joy to his son. The hymns and prayers which opened the service were done in an astonishingly short time, it seemed. Baxter McLendon stood up to obey that omnipotent call he had heard so many years ago. He began to speak the first sentences he had so laboriously contrived for the exordium of his oration. They came out of his mouth very well indeed—but there were only two or three of them. Within two minutes he was writhing in that most excruciating of tortures, trying to make a speech after the speech has disintegrated, the mind is stiffly floundering through a bog of words with no ideas, and the muscles have the sudden weakness that comes also from a blow on the solar plexus.

He reached out desperately for one of his carefully prepared statements and heard himself stammering the words of a sentence that he had planned to be his closing one. His mind recoiled from that mistake into the middle of his prepared speech and forced his mouth to say something that made no sense before a previous statement had led up to it, and that precedent sentence or two would not be remembered or spoken now until near the end of the speech. Some texts of scripture came out of his mouth automatically but entirely disconnected from any context. He found himself beginning all over again with the same opening sentences he had already spoken twice, and he tried to go on the oratorical road he had planned by the sheer momentum of talking rapidly and without

conscious thought—but that brave attempt only brought him up against a great blank wall destitute of any ideas whatever, with his mind groping out into a wordless fog.

But all that painful experience was as nothing to the feeling of failure he felt. The real torture at that Tuesday night prayer meeting was the sense of utter failure as a preacher. It was the end of the world to him, and a metropolis or a market place will not be more surprised when the trumpet of Gabriel sounds the end of earthly things— nor more dispairing when the day of judgment actually arrives—than Baxter McLendon was surprised and plunged into the depths of discouragement by finding that when he attempted to preach, he could not.

He was staying with his parents on the Crosland plantation, and during the drive home of five miles his taciturn father was silent. He went to bed, but there could be no sleep in the torture he felt through and through his sensitive self, and the wonderment that the impossible had happened. Late in the night he heard his mother ask his father how he had acquitted himself at the prayer meeting. Then there was silence for full two minutes, before his father replied in a tired voice:

"Jennie, it was the poorest preach I ever heard."

But a night of travail in thought brought a morning of more normality—his own normal personal equation with the large factors of persistence, determination, and the infallibility of that call to preach. The reactions to that first failure are interesting:

"To this end were you born to preach the gospel."

"Well, God, if there's any mistake been made, you've made it."

"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

Those three sentences express the substance of the viewpoint of the failure of his first attempt he had attain-

ed within twelve hours; and as he said them to himself in succession, they carried him back to exactly the position he had held for over two years—that he would be a preacher. That determination was irrevocable. The failure meant only more preparation and more hard work.

The Bennettsville people who were financing the development of this preacher had the patience—one is tempted to say sportsmanship—that generally brings success in the long run. They stood by him still, and decided that perhaps he needed education more vocational and less humanitarian than he had received at Asbury college; they said he should go to Moody Institute, Chicago, a training school with the emphasis on the training which had been about the same part in ministerial education that service as interne in a hospital has in medical education. So, after working all summer to make and save a little expense money of his own, Baxter McLendon hied himself away up north to Chicago.

There he worked hard, it goes without saying, but not with intensive application to the curriculum studies to the exclusion of other things as much as he had done at Asbury college. In the large city there was more opportunity for tangential work. He spent spare time in that great human laboratory, the Pacific Garden mission of Harry Monroe, where another famous evangelist had been converted a few years before; there he found his metier, although he did not fully realise it at the time, and there he got the most of the pleasure he experienced in Chicago.

He himself does not attach much importance to the time he spent in Moody Institute, as regards benefit to himself, his public utterences make pretty apparent. Doubtless it benefited him more than he fully appreciated then or since. It is very evident that a fiery youth, knowing that he was destined to preach the gospel up and down

the land as a life work, and anxious to begin at the earliest possible moment, would not be entirely in harmony with the conservative, more critically painstaking methods and ideas of that theological school. The faculty taught theology as a science and preaching as an art; and he felt no need of theology and wanted a royal short cut to the persuasive pulpit. But he staid there as apparently the only way in sight to become a preacher.

In that sort of school he for the first time ran into culture being cooked by recipes. He made the natural mistake, even for a product of the high civilization of South Carolina before the civil war was forgotten, of thinking that culture can be put on like a garment over any sort of body and underclothes; he had yet to learn that real culture, like gentility and good manners in high positions, is innate and a matter of infancy and not to be donned like a suit of overalls late in life.

But there in Moody Institute they seemed to think differently about that, and he earnestly strove to become cultured and scholarly appearing, since such things were indirectly but emphatically suggested by the whole atmosphere in which he found himself. When in later years, he was preaching to audiences numbering thousands night after night, he allowed himself occasionally to sneer at the graduates of theological seminaries as being uniform as bologna sausages, all the same size and stuffed with the same thing. But when he went home from Moody Institute he was under the influence of a cultural complex with Emerson, Shakespeare, Phillips Brooks and other scholars for its high priests.

Upon his return home, the ever helpful ministers there, pastors of the Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian churches at Tatum, six miles above Bennettsville, asked him to preach at a union service one Sunday night a few weeks

distant. He determined to make of the occasion such a success as would wipe out all memory of the disaster at that prayer meeting. With his usual industry he began at once to prepare his sermon from text to peroration and final gesture. He spent most of the intervening time hard at work on it.

Not to be caught again in the bog of extemporaneous speaking, he wrote out the sermon in full, feeling that his memory would enable him to recite it verbatim after he had learned it well. He spent hours upon its construction and especially its composition. He read theological books and all sorts of commentaries in the libraries of all the successful ministers; he went out and secured copies of works by Shakespeare, Emerson, some poets, and a few historians; then with his armamentarium assembled on a table and the floor, he began to write a sermon. It was sophomorical in the extreme and bristled with quotations and references to events in history; a few men yet living remember it as a sort of oratorical fireworks so brilliant that nobody could see what really was there. Its figures of speech were as the poppies in a California field.

He made certain that there should be no stage fright from lack of familiarity this time. He practiced delivery before the largest looking glass he could find in the house until he had every gesture starting automatically with its cue word. All this was coincident with memorising the manuscript sermon.

Such a sermon at a union meeting of three denominations, to be delivered of its poesies and resounding paragraphs as this one was to be, deserved that the audience should take pleasure in what it saw as well as in what it heard—such an excellent sermon called for good clothes on the preacher, and they were forthcoming. That congregation saw a preacher wearing a black Prince Albert

LIBRARY
GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

coat and trousers that had been in a seat in the senate of the United States. Senator McLaurin not only loaned a suit of fine raiment of the highest dignity of cut and material, but he also added a silk hat of the sort senators wore at the end of the last century.

The congregation was a little wearied by the long preliminary services before the sermon, but it was recompensed by seeing a strikingly handsome, perfectly dressed man who began to preach like the surf on the seashore. True, they did not understand what he was telling them, but the orator and the poet have the advantage over the writer that as long as their words flow and surge and boom and sing, it matters little about the lack of sense in the sentences. But let the rhythm jolt, the figures of speech get tangled, the gestures grow hesitant, or the least discord appear in the complicated harmonies, and disaster impends.

Amid all the flowery metaphors and ornate English of that sermon so carefully written and practiced before the looking glass, there were of course a few of exceptional merit in the eyes of their creator. One of these especially meritorious paragraphs slipped away during delivery in the pulpit, and the preacher was ten minutes past its place when with a chill of horror he noticed that he had forgotten to serve it in its proper course; he went back after it, to discover that it would not fit in where he was then in the sermon; he tried to extemporise some way to lug it in, for it was entirely too good to discard entirely and had cost too much work to construct in all its power and beauty; he was soon enmeshed in his efforts to bring in that fine bit of oratory, spluttering, stuttering, dashing on from hesitancy, starting a sentence and quitting in between noun and verb, struggling frantically for firmness on his rhetorical feet and finding them in quicksand—and finally an awful realization of the situation that paralysed

all action. Then silence and staring at the big room full of faces before him for a minute—and then flight from the pulpit through a side door of the church to his buggy and the road home.

That was a very important case of stage fright and a very important failure in its lessons and results.

It caused him to take stock of himself with more mind and less emotion, which was possible after his work in the schools had developed his mind a great deal. Instead of merely writhing in the torture of a failure in his destined life work, he came to some conclusions.

"I have this thing all mapped out wrong," he said to himself—and in this conclusion he was eminently correct. That first real sermon attempt at that union meeting showed him the futility of his trying to wear a disguise of scholarship, culture, fine rhetoric, rythmic sentences and elegant diction plastered as a veneer over the real Baxter McLendon. He had finally learned by painful experience that effective expression can only be the exudation of what is in one, in any of the arts, and especially in writing and speaking, and can never be designed after the model of another, or the fashions of any cult.

"Just being myself," was his new recipe for preaching, and when he adopted it is the date of the beginning of his real career as a successful preacher. He studied it all out with some accurate analysis of both the idea and of himself. His next step was to seek a school where he could learn to preach unconventionally and naturally and simply and let himself expand in the pulpit. He knew that, notwithstanding methods of delivery and diction, sermons must be constructed of ideas worth while arranged in a cogent sequence, as architects design a house that will stand staunch while winds blow and earthquakes tremble. He had precisely the right notion when he said

to himself that he must learn to build sermons. But he also saw the necessity of putting out a new style of architecture in sermons, as he had discarded the colonial, the bungalow, and the Tudor for something which should express Baxter McLendon instead of any former period, style or convention.

It was due to common sense that he studied in a clinic instead of a college, after that decision. He went to the evangelist, Bud Robinson, under whose administration he was converted, and asked to join the party.

Robinson welcomed him, although under a misapprehension. He thought the years of training at Asbury college and Moody Institute that young McLendon had received would make a preacher out of any human material that was put through that mill. Many persons, including some fathers, fall into the same error of mistaking the relations between training and material. Evangelist Robinson was much disappointed the first time he put his new understudy into the pulpit. Even by the unconventional canons of evangelistic preaching, it did not seem much of a sermon, even for Zion, South Carolina. A few days later Baxter McLendon was allowed to take the pulpit again, and by the standards of the older revivalists he did little or no better than before as a preacher. Baxter felt his deficiencies in that pulpit even more keenly than his preceptor, for those sermons were more important to him than to anybody else. Both of them were mistaken, it is evident, probably by setting up some measures of value or besides results which are the only true standards of values in all exertions for a purpose.

The results in that case came quickly and large. After preaching a very short sermon the last time, but a trifle longer than the first one, Baxter McLendon kept right on being himself which meant, then and always since, being

dramatic. The text of the first one was: "Ye must be born again", and of the second, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

Both those texts can be used as the themes for sermons of great dramatic power, because they contain within themselves all the elements of dramatic values. There is no way now to get a description of the sermons Baxter McLendon preached on them by a disinterested, competent critic who heard them from the pews; but one is safe in deducing that Baxter McLendon was charged with dramatic fire, however lacking he might be in argumentative, logical ideas, as he delivered those sermons.

Nothing else accounts for the results they produced, and what he himself tells about the results corroborates the idea of their being a stark, compelling drama. He says he stopped preaching because his sermon had petered out, and he suddenly changed tone and cried out:

"Folks, I can't preach, but God can save sinners—He saved me!" Then he stood silently beckoning with one hand and pointing to the mourner's bench with the other. If one visualizes that scene, that black haired, fiery eyed, handsome, athletic young man saying those words in a perfectly modulated voice full of vibrating, dramatic force, and silently but energetically beckoning, beckoning, beckoning, continually beckoning, one can realise why auditors responded by coming to him and the altar of repentence, and that the number ran into the scores. Previously at that meeting, Robinson himself had failed to break the chilly reserve of his congregations, and this was the first harvest of all the previous work of that campaign. Curiously, neither Robinson nor young Baxter sensed that the latter by simply being himself had preached to better effect than some others; both were discouraged just when they should have felt most encourage-

ment. Robinson said that landslide toward the altar could not have been caused by that preaching; but nothing else caused it. Robinson said that second sermon was a little worse than the first one, not recognising that what even he called the landslide was in itself the proof of its quality—in fact he was measuring it by conventional standards, rather than by its results.

So, while Baxter McLendon himself describes it as a failure, and Bud Robinson's only hope after hearing it was that God would by some more or less miraculous power make a preacher out of that youth at some time in the future, but not very soon, that sermon at that revival that night really marked the completion of the evolution of a barber into a preacher—but not yet as good a preacher as he was a barber.

There was much study and hard work and pulpiteering exercises required to make him as good a preacher as he had been a salesman of business guides and enlarged photographs, and a long road ahead to his destination of being as good a preacher as he had been a barber. But in the pulpit, Baxter McLendon had found himself. He found himself by being simply himself. Nobody else had ever used the same methods, because nobody else ever was like him. That night when he stopped in the middle of what the more experienced evangelist who was for the nonce his preceptor called a sermon only through courtesy, and with a dozen words and that irresistible, compelling, repeated gesture, brought down the aisles an avalanche of penitents, he demonstrated the dominant idea of thirteen years that he was destined to preach.

In doing that, he had proved erroneous the judgment of the good ministers of Bennettsville who had unamiously and philanthropically insisted that he could not make a preacher out of that newly converted barber; the ad-

vice of the Bennettsville business men that he could make a much better living in a counting room, or even his barber shop, than in the pulpit had as yet nothing to controvert it.

When we consider the aches and pains of those four years just recounted, and the privation in their toil and trouble, and compare them with the easy work and sunlight of the office of some business house in which he might have spent them at a salary allowing him to enjoy a home containing many luxuries of the time and place—when we take a bird's eye view contrasting those last four long years with what they might have been, we feel how inane is any idea that this evangelist chose the pulpit from mercenary motives.

Unlike some other evangelists, he never has been charged with too much seeking of money. And any such idea becomes absurd in the light of this chapter in his life—as in some of the other chapters also.

Of course there was much more of preparation, and indeed, as with all successful men, the process of growth in power and ability to preach is still going on—but that sermon marks the division between the apprentice and the journeyman worker in the preaching trade. Becoming a master workman is another and later era in the history being studied here. But the story of its preparation to preach ends in that pulpit in Zion, South Carolina.

## THE PRODUCT OF THE LOOM

In the science of mechanics, an important law is, that many forces acting together in many different directions may be platted definitely as to the outcome of the composite causes, and the effect of the composition of forces is called the resultant.

In Baxter F. McLendon there were numerous forces ranging from friendship to resentment, from a persistent obsession to marked irregularities in activities, from the toil of gaining an education to the lassitude of the great outdoors—almost innumerable forces, inborn and circumstantial, acting separately at times, and all together sometimes, to effect the production of a resultant in a mature man.

Enough consideration has been given the causative factors in the making of this man to enable us now to look intelligently at the resultant, the outcome of the causes, —the finished fabric woven in the loom of Destiny where many threads were broken or knotted, and at one time the pattern was entirely changed—to study the man as he is now.

Out of the loom has come a democratic aristocrat, a purposeful, careless youth in middle life, a turtle dove full of fight, a man with his wagon hitched to a star and often dumped into the ditch along the road, with his eyes fixed on high heaven and his feet stumbling into pits, a very human man preaching the highest of ideals, a strong, safe leader to whom a shoulder to lean upon is vitally essential —and above all a remarkably successful preacher and skilled practical politician.

Such a character with so many facets can not help being

Photo by Ackley

The home of Rev. Baxter F. McLendon in the edge of Bennettsville, South Carolina. In its rear are acres of woodland and Marlboro County soil with an immense garden, a small cotton patch, stables and large kennels for his fox hounds of royal pedigree.

interesting, as the life and work and activities of his mature manhood are studied and analysed and pictured.

Work in boyhood, hunting all over the coast section of South Carolina, mining coal, ceaseless activity of muscles, have developed a rather large, graceful, athletic, properly proportioned body, every movement of which spells strength in reserve.

That boyhood dissatisfaction with his place in the world, and the later climbing upward out of it to a much higher plane during years on years, which it required several chapters to describe in its deep shadows and high lights, the effects persisting in the man today, has given him a certain carriage as natural to himself as his nose. Watching him sauntering around the lobby of a hotel in his state's capital, filled with legislators and politicians, where he was entirely at home, one's impulse was to accost him with the natural question:

"Where's your ranch, and what's your brand?"

For he acts and looks exactly like a big cattleman from the far west, where only now that genus is found, and he belongs by appearance in a hotel at the Kansas City stock yards much more than anywhere else. A cattleman is furthest from his thoughts or model, yet he unconsciously carries out the illusion by wearing a sombrero or Stetson's finest quality. And it is a big ranchman that he suggests in looks, for the rawest cub of a newspaper reporter would pick him out of a lobby full of people as a big man.

Under heavy, shining coal black hair, and round black eyes that stab through space like twin aviation lights in a tower, is a face that is mobile, attractive and especially strong. The chin and mouth spell strength and determination—that stubbornness which makes stalwartness and the immobility of a mountain.

But there is playing constantly over that face, like water ripples in the sunlight, a little suggestion of a smile by which a soft and warm heart maintains its influential place in his character and beckons men to like him, as he loves them. Eyes, mouth and chin would cause a bandit with any sense to pass him by; and the rest of his face causes an ordinary variety of panhandler on a sidewalk to whine his beggary at him with certainty that it will bring a large coin, or even a bill. That face around the eyes is what makes children flock around him.

The upper part of it is a forehead of great breadth and height, not protuberant, but smooth and completing the face oval of which the axis is the eyes.

The center around which all the rest of his countenance is built is those black, deep, shining, piercing eyes. At the first fleeting glance, they are all one notices. They are not sunken, for his features in every way measure well to the proportions established by the Greek sculptors; but under the heavy, very black eyebrows they have a brightness that makes them appear set deeper in the head than they actually are. It is their piercing brilliancy that makes the rest of the face, and indeed all the man, appear to be formed around them. For they actually seem to pierce across a large room like a searchlight and through one, body mind and soul, like a stiletto.

In mature manhood, his carriage is lithe, from the combination of strength and grace in his muscular movements and in it is a mere suggestion of a swagger remaining from the boyhood days when he was trying to bully the world into admitting that he was as good as anybody else in South Carolina, notwithstanding his limitations; that argument ceased years ago, after he conquered the limitations, but one never entirely loses the angles made in the twig of a boy's innermost being.

His idea of how he would like to appear changes and flickers almost with the hours, and when he happens to think of that and tries to look as he would like to look, one mannerism after another comes out, lasts for a fleeting time, and disappears as his mood changes. But these are inconsequential and indicate only mobility of temperament.

That same temperamental phase in him makes one feel that after all he missed his vocation and should have been a grand opera star. It is the residium of the tearing and terrible reaction storms in the small boy on the plantation able to go to school rather less than more. Such soul storms in very young boys and girls may pass on over the horizon of sensitiveness, but their effects are always permanent, as geysers remain after the volcanic eruptions that occurred years ago in the Yellowstone region. In this mature man, the geysers are neither very large nor regular in erupting, but when they do, the water is boiling hot—the emotional outbreak is very certain to be noticed by all and sundry in his vicinity at the time.

Differing from many men, he does not display his temperamental ebullitions as much in his home and family as outside. His love, like his friendship, is overpowering to a degree that enables it to control all his other emotions even when they are running wild. And greater love hath no man than Baxter McLendon has for his wife and family. The only thing that modifies that love for them is pride in them—a pride fully justified, by the way.

The nature of his life work separates him from his family a good deal, and that fact makes him enjoy them to the full when he can be at home. Study, his books, future plans, attention to important business matters, everything is then subordinated to his being with his family as much as possible; even his recreation of fox hunting

is limited by his stronger desire to be in a room with his wife and children.

He plays with them little, for his own playthings are horses and fox hounds and pine laden swamps, and he can hardly get down to playing involving weaker, smaller, more trivial things. But he not only talks with them, but communes with them as pals—and he is at heart childlike enough to make a perfect affinity between himself and his children.

His conversation with them is always stimulating, elevating and developmental of the best in them. He always shows them the way to higher and better things, but he never preaches to them nor at them. Exposition of the realities in the big world around them, and patient explanation of why this is thus and that is so are included in his methods of child training and association with his children. He uses less of authority than of argument in teaching them what they ought to know and do—but they have acquired so much respect for his dictum in all things, that it is easy for them to accept as true the premises of his syllogisms and be convinced by his conclusions, without too much application of strict logic. In other words, they have learned that he is generally right in his advice—and it is always advice and never commands—and are very willing to take it for their own good, albeit chiefly to please him, after all.

While chief consideration must be given here to his wife and children as his family, it in fact is much more comprehensive. He has always been reaching out the helping hand—often both hands without either one knowing what the other was doing. As these words are written a part of his home menage are a manly expert fisherman whom circumstances, rather than meanness, dumped into the penitentiary and whom Baxter McLendon got

pardoned out; a factotum who is there because he needs a home rather than for any work he does; and a constant stream of kin to the *nth* degree passing through and stopping for a day, a week, or a month. They are all welcomed and in fact cordially and sincerely invited to come, and their departure is never speeded.

But it is in his own actual family of eight that Baxter McLendon gets surcease from toil and trouble and in whom he delights with a gusto as great as his love for them and theirs for him.

One son, Sol McLendon, after being graduated a bachelor of arts and made a master of arts, is a student of medicine with high standing in his work in a medical college. Another son, Dana McLendon, is of the class of '28 in Presbyterian College, at Clinton, South Carolina, and has been a leader in all college activities during his years there. Murray McLendon, a nephew, is a foster son since his father died some years ago, and for all purposes and feelings a son of the evangelist; he is Presbyterian College, '27, a year ahead of his foster brother, the representative of his college in oratorical contests, and a recognised leader in the student body during his four years of work there. All these young men look forward to a professional career for a lifework. All have justified the trust their father has always had in them and the methods of their parents in rearing and training children.

Miss Ruth McLendon is progressing along the road that leads through schools and colleges to a degree; she considers that it leads to training for a lifework worth while, perhaps being a teacher of history in a university; before she was half way through high school, she had progressed out of an old Southern idea to the extent that she believes every woman is entitled to the opportunity to make her own living and have a career, if she chooses.

William Baxter McLendon, never called by his name but always "B. F." by some connotation with his father, is a bright boy intensely studious until lessons are learned and then as intensely busy with a pony, consideration of the best kind of saddle, and play with other boys. At ten years of age, he is a real boy, never looking for a fist fight, but also never called Percy by the other boys nor anybody else. Next comes little Margaret, with bright anticipations in being old enough to start to school this year, and then the baby, His Highness, Walser Chilson McLendon, two years old.

Most parents will agree that it is some job to bring up in the way they should go those seven children, educate them through college with two or three in college at one time, and keep being a pal with each of them all the time. Baxter F. McLendon is doing just that with the help of his wife.

The sort of helpmate his wife is, and the influence and effect she has had on the character of her husband and his life work, is told in another chapter. When he is at home, he finds it a real home, because of her. By her he is relieved of all care about paying bills, ordering coal, repairing or remodeling the house, selling hunting horses—he buys them himself—having the inner tube patched, keeping the bathtub trap pervious, maintaining the woodpiles in proper ratio of lightwood and firewood, and nearly everything else generally devolving on the man of the house, except having his hair cut and opening the packages of books as they arrive. In addition to keeping her house spick and span, she attends to the business affairs of the conjugal firm, which he cannot well do when away from home and would never get done anyhow when at home.

For this energetic and careful evangelist may be

backed against the world at long odds for inattention to details of his own affairs, however important they are. He would take out a life insurance policy, pay the agent the first premium and forget all about paying the next premium and let the policy lapse. In the fall, he would have shipped home a large steam heating apparatus for his house and fail to tell a plumber to install it until the winter was nearly gone. He would dig a deep well and neglect to put in a pump. He has about a thousand dollars worth of fox hounds lent to other hunters and has forgotten who has them. Like a small boy with playthings littering his own and the adjoining yards, this man has his playthings scattered all over the community.

Another very boyish trait among some that are lovable and some that are irritating, is his habit of exaggeration. On the surface, this seems like vanity vaunting itself, or common bragging, but it is nothing of the sort. Nearly all lies are exaggerations of the truth; but the whoppers this man tells with such gusto are not lies by any manner of means—they are only the characteristic expression of a child showing off a new toy, or a pretty present, it has just received—simple statements, purely natural, by a sensitive being who really believes that his own children, hounds, horses, friends, home, native state and county, hats, employees, automobile, wife, or home town are so superior to any others that superlatives are inadequate to fittingly describe them. That goes with genuine modesty perfectly and without the least clashing.

His apparently childish carelessness is really only a corollary of his intense application of mind—as socalled absence of mind is actually presence of thought concentrated in one place and upon one object to the exclusion of all others. He has concentration developed to a very high degree, and when his mind is functioning it is with

an intensity unknown to many men. His concerns in life are not the multitude of circumstantial episodes of existence, but only four things: saving souls; friendships; politics; fox hunting—and he concentrates on these with sublime disregard for other things like life insurance premiums, making or saving money, keeping appointments or promises, his own health or the time of others, relative values of things—except fox hounds—bills payable or bills receivable, debits or credits, bedtime or food, weather or high water, the Devil or Tom Walker.

Now this habit of uncertainty is sometimes very irritating to other people upon whom it happens to impinge at times. He recognises the right of the other people to become sore in spirit, disgusted or downright angry—and as soon as he can meet them face to face, he talks tactfully, smiles that winning smile and converts them into admiring partisans in a trice.

That same capricious impulsiveness makes cooperation one word he has never placed in his vocabulary; he can not work yoked in an organization of the modern type, although personally he can give and take orders like a soldier. In the midst of a revival campaign, he often suddenly changes well laid plans by announcement from the pulpit, without the least notice, not to say conference, with the organization for which he is campaigning. Naturally this taxes the patience of persons well trained to modern effectiveness by organization, cooperative work, so successful in business, or anything else that is big. He considers that he knows best what ought to be done—and generally he is right about that—but the various other persons who also think they are competent to discuss it at least are apt to be peeved, hurt, angered, disappointed, humiliated, or something of the kind.

This last characteristic of ineptitude for organization

work is generally found in self made men, who have had to do things themselves to get them done, isolated from conferences and rarely in touch with others. It is the standard gauge, college educated, football playing, made in America, kind of man who fits into an organization like a gear wheel into a machine and works as merely a part of that machine.

His recreation is singularly simple. If he has any real interest in any game of either athletic or mental prowess, it does not appear either to his associates or in his utterances, colloquial, pulpit, or written. He neither plays nor mentions golf, tennis, baseball, football, polo—in which last he probably would excel—or other games, except perhaps when some championship contest causes the whole country to talk about it. This strenuous preacher has just one restful amusement which is his sole recreation after being worn, sometimes to a frazzle, by a long revival campaign; that is fox hunting.

He hunts the fox with his own pack of hounds, not only after the fashion of the English and their imitators, but also by the method peculiar to his native South Carolina—a method that saves the crops, utilizes the condition of modern topography, and seems to retain the chief elements that make the sport exciting, uncertain and stalwart. The terrain is flat and either a vast expanse of cotton fields or swamps of thick pine growth with tall trees as close together as they can grow topping saplings as thick as weeds on an abandoned farm. Neither the cotton fields nor the wooded swamps are adapted to cross country riding much of the year but the entire country is cut by roads, not only highways for community traffic, but private roads criss crossing the large plantations to enable the planters to reach all parts of the estates.

The South Carolina fox hunters ride much in the

roads while the hounds chase the fox through the swamps, across the plantations, or wherever Reynard's cunning may lead him. The chase there is as apt to be on a moonlight night as in the daytime. It is not uncommon for this evangelist to close a five weeks revival late one night, travel the rest of that night and all the next day, arrive at home in the early evening, and spend most of the next night fox hunting.

With the hounds in leash, he and Mr. Will Rowe and perhaps some other friend of the fox hunting gentry of Bennettsville travel to the territory selected; and foxes are so plentiful there and so widely diffused all over that part of the state, that there will be no difficulty in striking the fox not many miles away. On the edge of the selected hunting ground the impatient hounds are loosed and instantly are away across country, through almost impenetrable swamps, across a mile or more of cotton field, into the brush and out in the open again. From the lay of the land, and prescience of the strategy of the fox, the hunters calculate the general direction of the chase. The preacher and his friends try to get position in advance of the chase when it shall be in full cry.

After awhile he hears the muscial bark of Buck, who has struck the scent of the trail, followed quickly by the deeper notes of Queen and Jack, also good strike dogs, and instantly the mellow tones of the pack in full cry. He knows the voice of each dog as he does that of his family and friends, and understands the language of each as the musical notes rise and fall and take on different timbres, telling him what they are doing as certainly as one Chinaman tells something to another. Sometimes the chords of the hounds come upwind faintly although not so far away; sometimes the diapason of the music is bourne down wind for a couple of miles in the still night. Always

it is musical, and to this ardent hunter it is always music beyond any man made symphony.

The harmonies of the hounds move to right or left, nearer or farther away, slowly or rapidly. The hunters ride toward the sound of the chase, through the tangle of the swamps, now on a highway, then across a creek in the thick undergrowth of the pine forest, sometimes along a roadway across a plantation. The direction taken by the fox suddenly changes as Reynard doubles or turns to avoid the hounds he also hears; the hounds follow the trail; the hunter turns in whatever direction they lead.

Sometimes this means hard riding for miles through cotton fields or swamps to take the new position; sometimes it means only a short, slow ride along a highway; whatever obstacles intervene, the hunter keeps the chase coming toward himself, and the twisting and turnings of the trail of the cunning fox, marked for the hunter by the music of the hounds, makes this at least as hard riding as following the pack across country over fences, hedges and ditches in a terrain that is actually a park.

This preacher resting from the toil of the pulpit rides with the best of the hunters however hard the riding may be. Finally the hounds sound the bugle note that tells the fox is in view. The hunter must now ride furiously sometimes to get position ahead of the chase. The music of the hounds draws nearer and nearer, becomes louder and louder, takes on the quality of excitement as the dogs strain every nerve and muscle to catch the fox. The hunter makes quick shifts of position over whatever roadways or paths permit, for he must always keep the cry coming toward himself. Finally, the nearly exhausted fox lags, but the hounds increase their pace. Then with a triumphant bugle call, the leader reaches the fox—and the hunter must be there at the end, not to kill the fox and se-

cure its brush as a trophy in that South Carolina chase, but to rescue Reynard from the dogs and allow him to escape any harm and return to his wildwood, while the disappointed pack is led back to the kennels. There, the fox is not hurt when the hunt is ended.

But it is not ended, for the dogs seem to discuss it among themselves in the kennels for days, and certainly the hunters talk about it for weeks and perhaps years, if it happened to be a chase full of features. The preacher enjoys it all over again in retrospect as he lies in bed after a hard day in a revival; and he is pretty apt to put some of his best description into telling a great congregation about it sometime. It is the only recreation this preacher has, and he makes the most of it whenever he is at home for a day or a week.

Then he really lives the things he visualised so earnestly and eargerly as he listened to the stories of other fox hunts told by his grandfather, his father and the neighbors while the little boy sat in the firelight. In the realization of the marvels that were only word pictures to that little boy on the plantation, the successful evangelist finds his most precious restful enjoyment. And fox hunting is a sport for real men and not adapted to weaklings of any kind.

Unlike most other hard working evangelists, he gives no attention whatever to the preservation of his health. He eats in utter defiance of what his physicians and others tell him, even when sick abed, and is often unconcerned about protection against cold or rain between the hotel and the church. He has had several forced vacations as a result of this sort of doing as he pleases, combined with a big overload he places upon his bodily machinery and nervous system every little while. "He must quit this foolishness, or he'll quit preaching willy nilly" was the forecast of one

physician, and for once doctors and laymen seem agreed about that.

This disregard of the simplest elementals of his health is one of the examples of the fatalism that is in him to a considerable degree—the doctrine that what is to be will be, and man can not change it by any precautions nor efforts. It is a corollary of the other fact that he has never read much science and seldom has a reference to any scientific thing in his sermons.

He himself suffers most from his own boyish trait of forgetfulness and irresponsible carelessness which is really intense preoccupation with the four other things. As the absent minded man, immersed in the Einstein dogma, bumps into a post, or falls into a sewer ditch, this boyish, middle aged man sometimes comes a cropper that jolts him thoroughly, and once or twice has been a stumble into a pond of cold water that gave him goose flesh. And he is not entirely like a child, in this, for unlike a burnt child, he does not dread the fire, but may walk absent mindedly into the next burning brush pile that happens to be in his path.

It is partly this constitutional recklessness, but chiefly his philanthropy, and especially his friendliness, that has kept him down financially. He never made a good investment in his life except in life insurance, and his wife sees to it that the premiums on that are paid before default day. When the bubble of inflated land values in the Middle West and parts of the South burst, he was one of those loaded with land and mortgages and while he had paid part cash for what he bought, he had sold on time payments all that he had sold. A lawyer friend stepped in and took charge of voluntary bankruptcy proceedings and carried them through the federal court, leaving the preacher penniless with a heavy mortgage on his wife's house, their home. This phase of his activities has been

explained by Judge J. Preston Gibson, of Bennettsville, in a letter to the Wilmington, North Carolina, Star, published to circumvent idle gossip and reports about the bankruptcy. After explaining the legalities of the court proceedings, Judge Gibson says:

"He has received large amounts of money at his meetings, but he has spent his money generously and liberally. If there has ever been a man that has obeyed the divine injunction, 'Bear ye one another's burdens,' it has been Baxter F. McLendon. He has bought more clothes for poor, needy people, educated more boys and girls, and paid more doctor and hospital bills, and alleviated more suffering with the money that has come through his hands than any man I have ever known."

The word "No" was not in his vocabulary as long as he had a dollar, if someone needed it. He has been known to hold an evangelistic campaign and get several thousand dollars, and in a week's time, he would give it away. The only property that is in his wife's name is the home, and that has been in her name for several years. They mortgaged it to the fullest extent and put the money on his debts.

"Three or four years ago, during the times of inflation, McLendon bought some property and resold it and had to take it back, and after having paid twice the real value of the property was forced to give it up."

He has given an astonishing amount of money—at the time they call it loans—to Tom, Dick and Harry which is gone as permanently as though he had dropped it into the middle of the Pacific ocean. His closest friends are unable to make even a close estimate of the total, but they agree it runs into the tens of thousands of dollars—and they can estimate it much more accurately than he himself can do.

That loyalty to his friends, especially the old ones, is plain whenever the evangelist is home between revivals. Often, or generally, in the evenings when the family are getting sleepy, he wanders to the home of Senator McLaurin, or that of Will Rowe, or to some other lifelong friend for a visit and a chat, but chiefly simply to bask in the company of a friend. His own standard of loyalty to friends is much stricter than that of most of us. This loyalty to friends has been in him always, to the vicious friends of his youth as much as later to the thousands of christian friends he has made in his life work.

Back in the bootlegging era, the prosecuting attorney took him into a conference room and offered to dismiss the indictment against him, if he would disclose where evidence against some other bottleggers might be obtained; offered to get the disclosed evidence without arousing suspicion that Baxter had furnished it; met his first refusal with a threat of giving Baxter a long sentence in the chain gang on his own indictment. Baxter McLendon looked the lawyer in the eye, told him to do his worst, but no information against the others would be obtained from him, finally defied him, and walked into open court to take his sentence on his own plea of guilty—the only such plea, for the others were fighting their cases in court. His stalwart loyalty to his own code and companions was so sincere, and was being upheld at such great sacrifice, that the prosecutor's admiration was aroused, and in court the judge was officially asked to make Baxter's sentence the lightest fine possible. He has that same loyalty to his friends of quite another stamp now former United States senators and leading business men whom he visits so often when at home.

And eight times out of ten, those evening visits are partly to ask advice about something. Like all boys of

whatever age, he is very repentant after he has acquired a nice, large, painful stone bruise on his heel by walking carelessly, and he wants to tell his friends how sorry he is—but often he seeks their advice before he stumbles against a post along the road and hence is guided safely past it.

But after all, the guidance of Providence is his chief reliance, and God his best friend in his own estimation; there is scarcely an hour of any day that he does not pray simply and earnestly for divine aid, as he walks the streets, reads in his home, or studies in a hotel room. The omnipotent Almighty he considers the safest friend upon whom he may rely.

For with all his tremendous courage and persistency and inborn Scotch-Irish independence, he leans on his friends much more than he ever did as a resentful small boy—the experience that softened the resentment at his circumstances as he conquered them has lessened his determination to do as he pleases, and he seeks to do what is sensible. That he often does what is foolish is now due not to the flaunting of his independence, as in childhood, but to the fact that his chosen counselors are not accessible at the time. He always takes the advice of his wife, except when it runs counter to some request of some friend, when he is at home or has her at the end of a telegraph or telephone wire—and when his friendships cause him to go counter to her advice, he always admits later that it was good advice which of course a higher duty to friendship would not permit him to obey.

His belligerency is now reserved for real fighting in battles worth while in evangelism, or in the political arena, and there is none of that idea of fighting the world around him and society in general that poisoned his boyhood. He has acquired more mysticism with age and

reading, and while he talks about such things little or not at all, there occasionally crops out in his conversation a sort of shy, uncertain, questioning about those cant ideas that have replaced the Irish fairies and Scottish elves in these modern times of smatterings of psychology. Of industry he has plenty, as anybody who ever saw and heard him in a revival campaign need not be told; but that industry is utilised only for the four essentials in his life's philosophy, religion, friendship, politics and hunting. In these things he is tremendously energetic and industrious; that carelessness in other things precludes industry in them, but he is never really lazy in the least.

He is genuinely so gentle that when, as sometimes occurs, he tries to act real rough, the attempt is not very successful. He can be nothing but a gentle man, and at times his innate strength and courage seem to resent this, but the gentleness keeps uppermost and foremost however much he may seek to be otherwise on occasion.

If the specimen of humanity being thus analysed in this more or less literary laboratory were not several hundred miles away, he probably would argue against some of the details above set forth with such brutal frankness of dissection. But the candor he himself has inherent in such marked degree—another manifestation of the Scotch blood in his veins—would cause him to agree on the whole that it is a reasonably faithful sketch in black and white of Baxter Frank McLendon at the age of forty-eight, as he lives, moves and has his being in his old home town in old Marlboro county, South Carolina, where he was born.

For he is that rare bird, a man who has a very accurate knowledge of himself, his foibles as well as his strength, the lighter touches of the sculptor of his character as well as the marks of the mold in which he was cast by his Creator. Also, he is an excellent appraiser of other men.

Sometimes he allows his big heart and trusting friendships to succumb to the palaver of the self seeking men around him; but the experience of years in many different parts of the country has made him more discriminating; he is not so rapid as a camera in seeing men as they actually are, and he still makes mistakes occasionally, but given a reasonable time and acquaintance, and he will have a very accurate knowledge of the realities in another man. But he does not rely upon this so much as upon the estimates of men made by his friends for him—this paradox of a man with so much independence and stubborn persistence, and remarkable self education and surmounting of great obstacles, still lacks a good deal in selfreliance.

He owns eighteen hundred acres of game preserve thirty miles south of his home, but of the four big elements in his makeup today, the fox hunting is his relaxation and amusement, and it may be dismissed with what has been said about it. But the other three, evangelism, friendship and politics, can not be dismissed in this brief manner, and each must be given a section of his biography, in order to be adequately considered as factors and forces in his life at maturity.

## TWO GOOD REASONS

In many of these pages there are found constant references to the helpfulness of people to this man, because of an intense desire to aid him. This urge to help him has been found in many different persons from his boyhood in Mrs. Bella Roger's school at Parnassus through the Bennettsville people who financed his preparation for the ministry to his mature manhood; it is found in all kinds of people of all types—in very commonplace folk with neither education nor knowledge of the world, in busy business men and women of leisure, in United States senators and wealthy coal magnates. This persistent and strong phase of the forces that have made the man presents an interesting study and deserves some special explanation. Many of the men who have gone far from beaten paths to assist Baxter F. McLendon would not have done so unless it were well worth while, or there was something in him which excited their admiration and held their deep regard for some of his qualities.

The things in him which have caused for so many years such genuine friendliness for him to persist and function are especially two: His own appreciation and capacity to go to any extreme to repay friendliness; his genuine modesty and self effacement from any claim that success has been due to his own efforts alone.

In another chapter there has been given the results of a study of the effects his friendships have had upon the man himself. There remains consideration to be given to the effects his own ideas of friendship have had upon others with whom he has come in contact.

The essence of the present explanation lies in his own definition of friendship which is as complete as a circle, as

large as the cosmos, and as consistent in detail as anything made out of molecules. And that definition of friendship he long ago made for his own use has plenty of exemplifications in his acts and words.

In its minuteness, it leaves nothing too small for its inclusion. "I can't conceive of me telling anybody anything whatever uncomplimentary about one of my friends," he said once apropos of some frank but friendly comment upon a man he knew. He was in deadly earnest in that statement. It is beyond his conception of possibility to mention even the foibles, the little piccadilloes, even the funny individualities of one of his friends to another person. To him, his friends are all perfect persons insofar as they are ever to be mentioned to others. One of them may have a characteristic, harmless but often smiled at by close and real friends, but Baxter McLendon never refers to it; one of his friends may stumble and become the subject of town talk and perhaps investigation by the courts, but by Baxter McLendon the incident must never be mentioned to others; another of them may be criticised, to his face or behind his back, for his lack of thrift, his habit of sleeping late of mornings, his fondness for primroses, his lassitude, his forgetfulness, or what not that has become a legend among friends who with the utmost friendliness make serious or humorous remarks—but Baxter McLendon never mentions such things in ordinary conversation nor otherwise about his friends.

At the breakfast table one morning in his home, he said with unction that a certain man then on trial for homicide was guilty of murder and ought to get a life sentence, and sharply defended one of his friends from a perfectly true, humorous criticism.

But of course that kind of word loyalty is not in itself sufficient to create so much impulse to help him as we

have found pervading the people of all kinds who surround him. There has always been a much greater reaction in him to every friendly turn done him by anybody. This transcends merely keeping accounts of friendly acts and gestures and trying to keep the accounts balanced, which is what is done by many people, including all successful politicians and some captains of industry. It goes far beyond that bookkeeping idea of doing to others as much as they do to you in the way of friendliness, as for instance in the exchange of Christmas cards, or throwing business or public offices in the way of a friend who does the same thing.

In Baxter McLendon, the reception of a friendship, or a friendly turn, means that at any time thereafter he should do for that friendship all that is humanly possible —literally just that with all its lack of imitations. He has done just that many times, to the extreme limit of human endurance and at great risk. Most of the instances verified by the recipient of his friendship are the affairs of another, naturally, and hence can not be described here without breaking confidences. There are plenty of them extant in his home community and elsewhere. After hearing many of them recounted at first hand, and seeing one or two modern instances, the present writer is willing to go on record as saying that Baxter F. McLendon is the only man ever met in a pretty wide acquaintance who actually would, if necessary for a reasonably good result, give up his life for his friend. And do that not under the emotional excitement of a sudden danger, as from drowning or shooting, but deliberately and with the determination that comes from hours and days of serious thought.

That sort of trait partly accounts for men in the high-

est, as well as in the lowest, places aiding him at every opportunity.

It also accounts for some of his influence upon others, and some striking examples of the values in a sincere friendship as a factor in doing good and lifting up other men are to be found in the life history of Baxter F. McLendon. One of these concerns one of the men connected with him in a bunch of indictments for bootlegging upon whom he refused to peach to the prosecuting attorney, even when threatened with a chain gang sentence, if he did not.

That man was a state constable especially charged with breaking up bootleggers, but who had grafted into alliance with them. He was convicted and run out of the state. After becoming a private detective in Mississippi, he came back to Bennettsville to die of tuberculosis. He was walking the street there, with stooped shoulders, waxy face, eyes sunken and legs barely able to move, when Baxter McLendon, now pastor of the Columbia church, drove past him. The former pal, now a preacher, jumped out of the buggy and greeted the sick man in the old friendly manner, ending his greeting with the prediction that the other man would be in heaven or hell before Christmas. The man frowned at him and was curious to know why Mack had got religion, for there was no graft in that business that was discernible to a master hand at grafting. Baxter McLendon there on the sidewalk preached one of his most forceful sermons of his life. It was all about his own personal experience, and it rang true to that good judge of verities who was its single auditor. It ended:

"I proved to you when I was living the old life in sin, that I never went back on a friend, and I'm telling you, because I'm your friend."

That statement, and the recollections it brought up which proved it, convinced and converted the man of infidel inheritance who had lived a life devoted to deceit and dishonesty.

The two, the young preacher and the nearly dead consumptive, went to the McLendon home and the minister baptized the convert there. The convert made his peace with everybody in town he had wronged, and they were many. He telegraphed his estranged wife to come back to a different kind of husband. Within a few weeks, he was slowly ebbing out into the sea. He talked to Judge McLaurin several times as he lay on his death bed, barely breathing. Always his conversation recurred to his old pal in crime who had led him to the salvation of his soul. His talk was like this one afternoon:

"At six o'clock I'll stand before Him; tomorrow I'll be buried. Wire Mack to come and preach my funeral. I was born skeptical, my folks were infidels, I cared nothing for the Bible and less about any church. I feared God no more than I did men. I looked on all christians as hypocrites. If Mack hadn't been true blue in the old days and always straight with his friends, I'd be that way yet. Tell Mack goodbye for me, and that because he always come clean with his friends is the reason I'm saved before I die."

There is the more power in that story, the more one knows of criminals, grafting officials and private detectives, and their characters, habits and mental operations. It is a sordid story with a happy ending, and to one who knows the seamy side of the fabric of life and mankind it spells character in Baxter McLendon even more definitely than the other stories of his philanthropy, his piety or his evangelism.

The other characteristic in the man which has a major

part in surrounding him by helping hands at all times in his life is humility.

This is not so easily discerned in him on short acquaintance, for superficially he is something entirely different from a humble man. It is but one of many instances of traits in him covered up under a superimposed coating of another color and texture. Mostly, the veneer is an effort to overcome something undesirable to himself, and an effort so strenuous that it overreaches its objective and produces the opposite of the disliked condition—the pendulum swinging past the center far to the other side.

Here we hark back to that predominant idea of the boy that he was the submerged victim of circumstances and the caste system in his neighborhood, and that he must fight his way out of his lowly plane and show people that he was the equal of anybody. That meant constant assertion of his right to respect as a human being. It meant a front to be presented to the world. Somewhat curiously, but naturally after all, it came to mean the concealment of good and praiseworthy traits in himself when those characteristics seemed to weaken his capacity and ability as a fighter against a cold and unjust population.

He always was essentially, innately and thoroughly modest about his own ability, acquirements and achievements; that modest opinion of himself never harmonised with that claim of being the equal of anybody which he was asserting so strongly; hence, he felt, his natural modesty must be kept out of sight of the populace, or it would estimate him no higher than he estimated himself; and in hiding his modesty he moved so far at times as to justify the idea that he was a braggart and egotist. He never was an egotist though always full of egoism, and these are two very different things. There has been in

him always the boyish valuations that make his own possessions, as hounds, friends, home, children and automobiles the best in the world, which has been referred to elsewhere—but also always there has been a deep humility as regards his own ability and achievements.

In the very height of his success, in the middle of one of his greatest campaigns of evangelism, he received a letter from Senator McLaurin scolding him for certain innocent but indiscreet actions connected with public affairs in his home town in South Carolina. Nobody but a very humble man could have written in reply:

"You are right. All my life I have been more or less obsessed along that line, and it has handicapped me considerably. Your epistle caused quite an introspective period of conference between me and the Rev. Baxter F. McLendon."

"Yesterday, thousands of people from every nook and corner of this section of Oklahoma and Kansas came here to attend the meeting, and they cheered and laughed and wept. Then I went to my room and talked to myself and said: Well, Baxter, a few minutes ago, you were a Brobdingnagian in the pulpit, and now you are a Lilliputian out of it. . . . . I just received a call from the state university to preach to the student body and also a letter from the Governor telling me he is coming as soon as the legislature adjourns to spend a week with me."

"I am an enigma to myself and, I opine, to my friends. I sometimes wonder how the dear Lord can take a man with virtues as frail as ocean foam and use him."

When a man in middle age, just after over five thousand people have deluged him with plaudits, writes out of his innermost heart like that to a friend in answer to a paternalistic verbal whipping, the friend is sure to love him the more; and when plaudits and honors from schol-

ars and men in very high places excite in the recipient only a wonder why they should have come to so Lilliputian a man, and he conceals that surprise from the public and confides it only to a very old and close friend, that is genuine humility.

"Any biography of Baxter that omits emphasis on his humility of spirit from his youth until now would be incomplete and deceptive," says one of the keenest, wisest and most prominent of the men who have been his friend for years, "and except for that trait in him, I certainly should not have bothered much with him all this time and now; while I have been talking to you about him, I have been analysing why I have been so much interested in Baxter and am yet; if he actually had one per cent of the self conceit and braggadocio he apparently displays sometimes, I wouldn't take the least interest in him; but as he actually is, I feel an intense interest in him and liking for him. Why? Of course it is a complex of reasons, as is the case in most human reactions, but I believe his humility first, and his appreciation of favors second, with all that grows out of the latter, are the foundation stones of some of us feeling towards him as we do."

Now it happened, that the very men with penetration enough to see beneath the surface of the make-up with which Baxter McLendon so often tries to hide his real self are the men who are big enough themselves to be the most valuable friends a man can have, because of their wisdom, experience and power in the world. So, what ever mistaken estimates of him the general public may make, the ones who are able to estimate him most correctly are not only his staunchest friends, but his most important friends and most powerful friends. As regards the public, and its errors about him, the most curious

thing is, that he has never even tried to camouflage any of his less admirable qualities, but only his best traits are the ones he attempts to hide under a mask at times.

Few persons are like that. Most of us try to hide our least likable attributes and leave in plain view those that are most admirable. This man works in reverse in that respect.

Some very intelligent men who have known him all his life shake their uncertain heads and say: "Baxter's an enigma to me."

Others less friendly, or unfriendly, deny the existence of much good in the man; these would take issue with much that is written herein; they are men who cannot see beneath the surface, can not analyse a personal equation except one in the simplest form, and can not reconcile seeming contradictions which are actually entirely harmonious.

This chapter seeks to make plain the explanation for that constant help Baxter F. McLendon has received from very important persons all his life, which is referred to so often in other parts of this study of his life. To find that urge to help him based on his own supreme loyalty to his friends and on a genuine, deep humility inherent and fixed in his innermost nature, is to discover what all manly men are sure to admire and respect.

And it is an illustration of the fact, that the deeper one delves into Baxter McLendon, the finer grade of gold ore one finds. The outcroppings on the surface are sometimes rather low grade, but the vein itself is always high grade ore, and the deeper it dips the better it is, clear back to the mother lode.

The first whipping Thomas McLendon gave his eldest son was not the memorable one, in multiple, which was a righteous effort to induce proper respect for a parent and stop an impudent whistling. The very first whipping the son got from his father, he says, was not so hard and for an entirely different reason—although its basic lesson was that a son should respect the judgment of his father too much to undo the political work of the father—and especially for the very young son to take a wabbling voter behind the barn and change his vote after the father had spent a good deal of time persuading the uncertain citizen to vote right.

There were two candidates for prosecuting attorney—called solicitor in South Carolina—and Thomas McLendon was enlisted for the campaign of one of them. On election morning, Thomas stopped a passing voter on his way to the polls and carefully marked his ticket for solicitor as he thought it should be voted.

Now it happened that the young son did not like that lawyer candidate, for the reason or lack of reason that boys like or dislike certain men. After the ticket had been fixed by his father and the voter carefully instructed about the solicitor part of it, the voter started on his way. But young Baxter winked and nodded the voter behind the barn, told him his father was all wrong about the candidates for solicitor erased his father's markings on the ticket and marked it for the candidate his father opposed. When the father discovered all this there ensued the first paternal chastisement of the very young politician.

The incident suggests two things in the development of the man; when very young he had persuasiveness that could overcome his father's and sway voters; when very young, he dropped into practical politics as a fluffy baby duck enters the water. Since he grew up, he has been in politics very much and very successfully—and without the least detriment to his ministerial work, by virtue of the way in which he keeps the two activities separated.

There are two fundamental elements in the political activities of this preacher of very considerable power; one is the calls made upon him frequently by political leaders and preferment seekers for his aid in their plans and campaigns; the other is his own desire to help his own state and its people to better government and conditions—for economics and sociology are always interdependent with politics.

Each of these causative elements, help for his friends and philanthropic aid to his fellow citizens, has its own special appeal to his innermost nature. The obligations of friendship, as he views them, and the urge to help others, are very strong traits in this man. When the two are combined—when rendering assistance to a friend coincides with helping better conditions in South Carolina—the appeal is as irresistible to him as burning thirst or ravishing hunger. He never fails to respond to either appeal.

There are also two elements in his strength politically —which in real politics always means the ability to influence votes. It goes without saying that the same basic methods used in the pulpit to persuade people to align themselves for right living will also when used in the hustings persuade people to vote right.

The other element in his political strength is not an acquired art, but an inborn sense cultivated by his boy-

hood and early life; it is his certain and complete knowledge of the masses of his state, mostly poor, of little ability to think out the things that congressmen and legislators debate on the floor, and less information about fundamentals in economics, government, finance or sociology.

"He can speak their language," a South Carolina statesman said of his ability to secure the votes of that class of electors for his candidate or his cause; he talks to them as one of themselves in a fashion that proves him to be of their own kind and caste—even if he did not so inform them over and over in his speeches.

The best thing about that particular kind of electioneering ability is, that it is able to appeal to voters in the mass and thus the same time and energy produces results many times those obtained by talking to citizens individually. It is on the stump that he is most effective, and there his services are most utilised; although he is also called upon at times to argue with members of the legislature—which he does much after the fashion in which he talks to the almost persuaded sinner in a revival; his keen knowledge of human nature is utilised in both places.

In no other state is there quite so much confidence in leaders as in the South Carolina electorate. This gives him a big trump in the political game, for Baxter McLendon has always been a leader in some activity or other. He has never played the piccolo in any band. And in the state which has always stood for some man rather than some dogma, from John C. Calhoun to Cole Blease, a man of the personal characteristics of this evangelist has power in both politics and pulpiteering.

To the suggestion that one is apt, in the heat of composition of writing or oratory, to insert unconsciously into

his discourse the things foreign to his main theme in which he also is much interested, he replied emphatically:

"I never mentioned politics directly or indirectly in the pulpit; when I went into the church door, I dropped it."

To the thought that it is extremely difficult to gain sufficient control of one's tongue to prevent one's hobby sometimes slipping out of the lips unlocked by the fervor of an oratorical outburst on another topic, he retorted with all the strength he can put into the vibrant lower tones of his voice:

"Let the preacher play politics in the street as a citizen, but not in the church—that's the Lord's work there."

And so he keeps the two, generally divergent, but in him coordinated, things, the gospel of Christ and the politics of Andrew Jackson, entirely separated in his work.

As all reformers who really achieve anything worth while know, and President Wilson once discovered, the only way to accomplish things in government is to play that game of practical politics which has its Hoyle in Alexander Hamilton, Amos Kendall, Dewitt Clinton, Abraham Lincoln, Samuel R. Tilden, or Theodore Roosevelt, according to the principles which experience has made its common law. Baxter McLendon understands this very well. While his objectives were idealistic to the verge of radicalism a few decades ago, and are still ahead of the times in South Carolina, while growing more and more realistic and better understood with more approval in the rest of the country, he has never had any idea that they could be translated into laws by the mere force of their beneficence. He has always known that to succeed in his political idealisms he must play the very realistic game according to the rules. But he also has realised that his

pulpit evangelism would be wrecked quickly by the least intrusion into it of any suspicion of political influences. Hence, the extreme care he has taken to keep the two things entirely separated.

Knowing the king of American games as he does, he knows that the cards that count are the printed papers dropped through a slit in the top of a box on certain appointed days. He understands that these cards that count are played by people who use them in the most erratic ways, often beyond the ken of the mere logician. He learned long ago that the American people in the mass, in municipalities, in states and largely in the nation, are governed not by the subtleness of reasons, but by the ebb and flow of their emotions. It happens that in South Carolina, the voters have gained whatever of knowledge of public questions, not by reading newspapers, but by listening to speeches; one result is, that the mouth is much mightier than the pen in that state. The press is very useful and influential in giving simultaneous tips to the many spellbinders who are the actual instruments of politicians, but it is these orators who are at the end of the analysis of forming public opinion in the Palmetto state.

Baxter McLendon utilises this state of affairs, not only to help his friends, but to push his own measures. His most effective work is done on the stump, on the platform in the towns, in the hamlets, in the back country where large audiences gather even where there are not enough houses to be called a village. Talking their own language to such audiences, with his oratorical ability as useful there as in the pulpit, he exerts the influence that guides the hands that mark the ballots that are the court cards in the great game.

That influence has always been for measures and ideas which meet with the approval of the best of sociologists,

economists and christians. It has not always been entirely approved by the cotton barons and Bourbon aristocrats, still imbued with the traditions of an antebellum civilization, as magnificent as that of Louis XVI and from that very grandeur and pleasure difficult to relinquish.

Sometimes there is a curious admixture of the two forces, aristocracy with its pleasures and utilitarianism with its needs. Fox hunting, acknowledged as a great sport for gentlemen, includes owning large kennels of fine dogs, but has never been considered a useful vocation. Without arguing metaphysics, furs are the product of an industry which is useful to mankind. Furs are universally obtained by trapping, as foxes are hunted with dogs. The dogs of the fox hunting gentry often step into the traps of the fur industry and are ruined as hunters and often held for days and weeks to a cruel lingering death. This cruelty to dogs must be stopped, it was perfectly apparent, by prohibiting trapping.

Baxter McLendon threw his whole strength into the fight for the prevention of that great cruelty to dogs. Having a large kennel of fox hounds and spending his vacations between revival campaigns riding behind them, he pushed a movement for an act of the legislature making it an offense punishable by heavy fines for any person to set a trap in the state of South Carolina. He traded his influence for other hobbies of other persons for votes for the anti-trap bill; he lobbied for his bill at Columbia with all the arguments that appeal to members of a legislature; he wrote many letters, since his pulpit work prevented him from stumping the state, to Tom, Dick and Harry in the back country urging them to bring the pressure of the dear voters upon their representatives and senators—and no man in South Carolina is too poor to have a hound dog; but his most interesting move, be-

cause so cannily practical, and so efficient as an influence upon the type of man who gets elected to the legislature, was a circular he sent to every member of both houses at Columbia, primarily, and secondarily to thousands of voters all over the state.

This circular had at the top of the sheet a large halftone photograph of a hound dog holding up and out the stump that was only half a left hind leg, while its uptilted head and open mouth called upon high heaven and the South Carolina legislature, not for vengeance, but for the protection of other dogs from a similar mutilation. That picture of that dog was more effective than a book full of argument, or an hour of impassioned oratory.

The short letterpress beneath the picture was an open letter under a Bennettsville date line, of six pungent paragraphs and only twenty lines, containing one idea to the paragraph. The first stated that the dog above is highly bred and trained and cost two hundred dollars. The second described how he lost his leg in a steel trap and suffered horribly for two weeks more dead than alive. The third told that the owner of the trap which caught the dog a second time was a Croatan who had served in the chain gang twice for moonshining and for resisting arrest —a deliciously artistic and effective appeal to prejudice. The fourth paragraph brought tears to the eyes with its account of the suffering of a dog in a steel trap, with just a little suggestion of class prejudice to the reader; the fifth paragraph of three lines concentrated on prejudices and after seven words of the "viciously cruel" kind, it contained "negroes", the "ragtag", the "parasites of society" as destructive of game in South Carolina; the final paragraph of only a line hoped that the old Palmetto state would "lead the Union in abolishing this barbaric use of the steel trap"—which was special pleading to the

legislature, for its history shows that South Carolina dearly loves to do things other states have not accomplished.

But this instance of one phase of his political activity is not illustrative of the trend of his work in that game; it is merely a good example of his canniness and earnestness in politics. Almost always he is fighting on a much higher plane. A better, and typical, example of the sort of things for which he buckles on his armor and dedicates his sword is his long and very earnest campaign for better conditions for the common people, which better conditions, he maintains, can grow only out of the root of better education for the masses.

The political objectives of Baxter McLendon are seen best in a short extract from one of the many things he has issued, as newspaper articles, as well as in orations. He has said this:

We have had too many politicians that thought of the next election and not of the next generation. My argument is, that the state that has the schools has the future. The sheet anchor of the state is the public schools, and a rigid, stringent compulsory education law.

We haven't as a state scratched the varnish on the back door of public school efficiency. . . . . We are topheavy. We have neglected the elementary for the academic. Every year the legislature has poured thousands of dollars into the coffers of the state colleges, thereby guaranteeing the education of boys and girls who would have been educated had there been no state colleges, and neglecting the country schools and elementary education. Our forbears believed in class education, and our law makers have religiously practiced it.

Soon after an election, Baxter McLendon wrote to the governor of South Carolina a letter in which appear similar sentiments, another illustration of how dear the education of the masses is to this evangelist, and of how

determined he is to fight for them politically. Part of that letter was:

I hope you will remember that you are the governor of a state in which, according to the best statistics available, the percentage of illiteracy is higher than in any other state in the Union with one or two exceptions; her people spend more for chewing tobacco than for books. Neither have they revised the antebellum conception that education is a private and not a public concern. There is no general acceptance of the doctrine that the mental and physical training of every child is a responsibility of the state. . . . .

We need a great forward movement along educational lines in South Carolina, and it ought to be preceded by a stringent compulsory education law that would really function in Possum Hollow, Coon Ridge and Ignorant Center, as well as in towns and cities.

And here comes the origin of this crusade for education in the two lines in the middle of the following paragraph, reading:

Yet as I go back over the years, I often wish that we might have had such a law when I was a child.

This sentence introduces his own description of his having to leave school to work on the plantation, and his borrowing to read the life of Washington and Gibbon's Rome. The next paragraph is:

Governor, I have torn this chapter out of my own boyhood life, because it is the experience of hundreds of children today in South Carolina.

One detail of the self education of Baxter McLendon is the strong grasp it has given him on the principles of the government of these United States sensed by the men who made the constitution, and the lucid understanding he has of the value of that same constitution as it was written to safeguard human liberty and make this government of ours a permanent one.

Progressive to a high degree always, he realises that

progress must be made within the constitution; and that progress which steps outside the constitution is advancing for a fall over a precipice. His most earnest political utterances are upon constitutional matters, and many lawyers have less real insight into such matters than this preacher has close to his heart as well as in his mind. His earnestness is shown in this quotation:

I opine that even an ignorant person can see that we are drifting away from the constitution to a socialistic democracy—in other words we have drifted from the republic toward democracy, from statesmanship toward demagogism, from excellent to inferior service. It is an age of retrogressive tendencies. We are going down hill, and it looks like everything has been greased by various agencies for the occasion.

You can go away back beyond the gates of the morning, back when ages were but drifts of foam on the mighty sea of time and travel on down through the years, and you will find that from the time the world was young until 1788, government was a failure. A black cloud in the sky of the happiness of nations, it was swinging from one extreme to the other—from the Lenins, Trotskys and Dzerjinskys to the proletariat, from the mob to the monarch, from the monarch to democracy, from democracy to the demagog, from the demagog to mobocracy, from mobocracy to autocracy, from feudalism to communism and from bondage to license—and every one of them was a dismal, hideous failure.

Until 1788, we had no religious freedom, no civil liberty, no freedom of speech, no freedom of the press, no security for individual rights, no popular education, and no universal franchise. You can stand on the year 1787 and look back to the dawn of creation and truthfully say there was no government that functioned well.

Noting that, "the constitution of the United States was cradled in prayer, the infant republic was organised in prayer, and the ship of state was launched in prayer," he continued:

In less than ten years, light began to come out of darkness, order began to come out of chaos. . . . . For the first time in the history of the world was made a place, a land, of liberty and opportunity for mankind. That was absolutely the only governmental document which has stood the test of time. The constitution was to the science of government all that the ten figures were to mathematics, the alphabet to language, or the scale to music.

But in the face of this marvelous prosperity and advancement, we began to listen to demagogs and propagandists who kept up a constant campaign of agitation; and we began to slip away from the constitution into the whirlpool of social democracy . . . . which made it impossible for the government to function in accordance with the plan of the constitution . . . . And the result is that we have socialistic doctrines, and anarchistic heresies, city managers, boards, commissions, and commissions to chaperone commissions until the people are bewildered and in a maze as regards government.

The foregoing gives one a very good idea of the political philosophy of Baxter F. McLendon, and in it there is some suggestion of the intensity of his feeling about it all, and the courage and vigor with which he fights for his political tenets—but never like a professional Reformer, but skillfully and cannily in strict accordance with the rules of the game of practical politics.

That he agrees with the dictum of a great English statesman that the constitution is the greatest document ever struck from the mind of man at any one time, and ranks it next to the inspired Bible, appears more or less parenthetically in his sermons frequently. He follows logically to the end that the constitution is the corner stone of our government, replacing the divine right of kings, and in one of his sermons said:

Today this government is being challenged in a hundred different directions. The state is being challenged by the God forsaken, low down bootleggers. The laws

of the land are being trampled under their bloody feet, as they hiss at the constitution of this country. . . . . Are we going to settle the question as our forefathers, or are we going to bow the head and bend the knee? We have got to act! We are a government of the majority. The United States supreme court decided that the Eighteenth amendment was enacted according to the constitution, and the Volstead act is binding in all states. . . . . Our liberty and our constitution depends upon the observance of the will of the majority, and the will of the majority is expressed in the constitution, and I am standing for that expressed will.

In another sermon long ago, he showed the connection in his mind of the divine Bible and the constitution of the United States in the sentence: "The Bible is the basis of our constitution."

That although a Southron born and bred, he has been a student of the federalism of Abraham Lincoln, is shown in the following extracts from a letter he wrote in November 1926, to a prominent citizen of his own state:

Whatever I may be, or not be, I am an American stamped on the cork, blown in the bottle, and dyed in the wool. I may care little for parties or creeds, but so long as the stars and stripes blazes in God Almighty's blue heavens, I will stand by this country that has taught the world that liberty can exist without license and authority without tyranny.

I can no more imagine a man loving only the north or south half of his country, than I can imagine him loving only the right or left side of his wife. A man who loves his country on the installment plan is not fit to be buried in its soil, or drowned in its waters, or hanged from its trees. The man who really is a loyal American, loves his country as a whole. There is room in his heart for every acre of its sunny soil from ocean to ocean.

I am proud of every man, whether north or south, east or west, white or black, who by the nobility of his character or the ingenuity of his intellect has added one scin-

tilla to this land. They are my people, my countrymen, friends and brethren.

Do you live north of the Mason and Dixon line, then I claim an interest in your galaxy of intellectual Titans. I stand in the august presence of Lincoln's broad humanity, of Webster's matchless potency, the perspicacity of a Lodge, or the patriotism of a Roosevelt. Are you from the South, then I doff my hat to the statesmanship of Jefferson, the cunning genius of Booker T. Washington, or the bravery of a Jackson or a Lee.

As I am going up and down this land from north to south and east to west, preaching the gospel of good citizenship and a high standard of morals, my cry is every American shoulder to shoulder, a band of brothers with one flag, one country, one destiny!

And I have yet to hear of an ex-Federal who fought against the South say one disrespectful word against a Southerner, or an ex-Confederate who fought against the boys in blue speak disparagingly of the people of the North.

His very clear understanding that government in this country rests on the foundation of public opinion—and inferentially that public opinion should be kept moving onward and upward, but always in parallel with the constitution of the United States, is apparent in all his public utterances and political letters. In one of his sermons, he expresses this:

I'll tell you, the collective thought of the people is something to stand before with awe. Thought backed by purpose and will holds all earthly potentialities. The real controllers of America today are the creators of public thought and our destiny depends entirely upon the shape of that thought.

It is such a realisation of the potentialities within public opinion that gives so much vigor to his own pronouncements on public affairs, from instilling reverence for the constitution to denouncing lynching and bootlegging—and on many other present day tendencies and problems,

the status of labor and capital, the I. W. W. threat, the Russian sovietism boring from within our institutions to destroy them, the conditions at Herrin, Illinois, the Louisiana tortures, the bomb exploded at the doorstep of the Morgan bank in New York, immigration, the crime waves, European fighting and famine since we had international obligations thrust upon us, and other things in great variety, and real importance as the student knows, he has discussed in the pulpit and on the stump. With his patriotic ideas about the sanctity of the American constitution based upon the Bible, he feels that such discussions are as appropriate to the pulpit as to the political platform.

Certainly progressive politically, the idea that progress must be achieved inside and not outside the constitution is constant with him; as a real progressive, he is conservative to that extent. This control, or limitation, of progressiveness makes him impatient with the real radicals, and he frequently lambasts them, and uses equal force in the warnings he gives the Bourbons in our republic.

His cure for all this, and the other perils he paints in his political portrait of his country, he finds in his own prescription: Back to the constitution! And he generally adds that back of the constitution is the Bible and God. He believes that his country has not a broken leg which must be set and splinted by the use of force, but has a disease which can be cured by doses of medicine regularly administered—his favorite prescription, the constitution, quantum sufficit, pro re nata, if he were to write it in the manner of the doctors of medicine, instead of thundering it from pulpit and platform with the gestures of a catapult and the roar of the surf in a storm.

Entirely logical is his method of enforcing the consti-

tution by oratory with another fundamental thesis he believes, which he once formulated in a sermon in these words:

The hope of legislation has failed; it was the dream of Plato that he could establish an ideal republic by compiling and enforcing a perfect code of laws. It is as impossible to enforce righteousness on the people by legislation, as for a leopard to change his spots at your command. You can not legislate morals into a people. You cannot discipline a man into being good. Israel had a perfect code of laws given them by God; they vowed they would obey them; but they trusted in their own strength, and failure was inevitable.

This introduces a section deprecating too many laws in this country which led on into his apotheosis of the constitution as the only basis of government that ever succeeded permanently in any nation mentioned in history.

That he conceives that he can be of most use to his beloved country by sounding battle cries and oratorically administering his panacea prescription is indicated often, as in this extract from a whole sermon he has entitled "Americanism:"

The time has come when it seems that every cause has an order except the American cause, every flag a defender except the American flag, and every ism a promoter except Americanism. We have reached the point where all red blooded Americans must stand together. Anybody who has a drop of blood flowing through his veins, male or female, must fight for the principles of God, liberty, home and law, and all that goes with these things.

And of course, those four principles are all contained in the constitution, the foundation of good government that lasts. He is everlastingly recurring to those who consider the constitution as a rather worn out tool which can be much improved by allowing them to tinker with that product of some very respectable but back number

men like Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton and the others who did the best they could with the slight education they had compared with a modern parlor socialist. He recognises that such pseudo-illuminati cheep only in times of social unrest. In one of many oratorical glances he directs at them he says:

I never expect to see wealth without poverty, vice without virtue, religion without hypocrisy, sobriety without drunkenness, but I want to see a great, God fearing nation that will throw down the gauge of battle to any gang of hyphenated cutthroats, organised or unorganised, which attempts to overthrow the government of the United States of America.

I think the lowest down degenerate ever spawned in hell and spewed out of perdition is the man who plots against the government and defies its laws because they interfere with his personal liberty.

All the quotations from the public utterances of Baxter F. McLendon in this chapter have been chosen to give the reader a fair and pretty complete conception of what he stands for as a politician. It will be noted that all the things he advocates bear upon the nation as a whole, upon government in its broad, universal sense of the word, and have no reference to the details of economics or foreign policies upon which patriots may disagree.

There is some deep philosophy in his consideration of waves of thought sweeping over a nation being reflected in its governmental policies and actions, and as to such a wave being belligerent, he says:

Therefore when the present wave of thought embraces a majority of the minds of our people, then instead of the government being a barrier to violence, it will become the engine through which distress and cruelty will find expression. A horrible thought, and yet we have only to look across the sea to find the functions of government reflecting the cruelty and rapacity of the nations.

But the mass thought can be controlled, and should be, and:

The real controllers of America today are the creators of public thought, and our destiny depends entirely upon the shape of that thought. That is where we reap what we sow.

Those Marlboro county people who have known Baxter F. McLendon from childhood repeat constantly that he was always for the under dog, not only in sympathy, but to the extent of assisting him practically. He once wrote, printed and circulated a pamphlet arguing for more sympathetic treatment of South Carolina felons in the penitentiary, in which his thesis was, that reform by impressing upon convicts that somebody cares for them —and especially that God has not deserted them—is better than unmerciful punishment of them. He argued for mercy and more pardons, saying that "a governor should have a human heart and bowels of compassion."

Keeping his political and his evangelistic activities well separated, leaving the former at the entrance to the church or tabernacle, his politics have never harmed his christian influence, and never but once attacked his evangelism —and that time he was tricked into a trap. Two statesmen named Blease and Manning were opposing candidates for governor, and a Florence banker whom McLendon thought was his personal friend telegraphed asking whether it was true that McLendon was working for Blease. Seeking only to satisfy the curiosity of a friend, he answered in the affirmative. It happened that most of the ministers of his own denomination were against Blease at the time, and in South Carolina the ecclesiasticals are partizan to a degree unknown elsewhere. The Florence banker hurried a copy of McLendon's answer to all the presiding elders and prominent Methodist ministers in the

state, especially those bitter against the candidacy of Blease, and all of these were much peeved that this candidate for admission to their annual conference should have the temerity to announce his support of the candidate they were fighting. A few days later, the conference met at Florence and Baxter attended it, and he says in a future newspaper interview about it:

"I don't think as many as two Methodist preachers spoke to me. They were as cold as a pawnbroker's hand toward me. I will never forget how lonely I was at that conference—ostracised and stigmatised by men I thought were my friends and whom I had helped."

The incident is an interesting side light on politics and preachers in general in South Carolina, and the unregenerate citizen of another state where preachers are not partizan may smile at it. But such things cut Baxter McLendon to the heart. Yet as to politics itself he remarked once in print: "But it sure is fascinating and entertaining!" That same interview ended by his hustling out the reporter with the apothegm that "any preacher who dabbles into politics is a fool." But many foolish things are fascinating and entertaining, and this preacher keeps politics out of his pulpit.

So carefully does he keep to political science, and away from even a trace of partisanship, in all his sermons, that a careful search instituted to find, if possible, one instance where carelessness, or the rapid speech of vigorous argument, had let slip in something partisan failed to discover a sentence or phrase to which the chairmen of the Republican and Democratic central committees could not both subscribe.

As a matter of fact, he is a Democrat in South Carolina where it is practically impossible to be anything else and have any influence in pulpit, forum, on the platform,

or anywhere else than in a Republican convention. He stands for states rights, as Coolidge did in one of his speeches and as the North is adopting that tenet quite generally; he advocates fewer laws, which is good Democratic doctrine from the days of the fathers; drawing him out in conversation on topics and propositions on which there is almost a party line-up in congress, finds his views aligned with the Republicans on some questions and with the Democrats on other matters of argument—and the student of politics and parties who is writing these lines has never been able to classify him as being really Republican or Democrat essentially and with his ideas based on either Jefferson or Hamilton. Harking back to his development, it may be that by inheritance and boyhood sorrows he was given a marked tendency toward the Democratic party, and that his self education made him lean far over toward the Republican party in many lines of political thought. His location would probably cause him to vote either ticket which would give the best results for good government—the Democratic in South Carolina and the Republican in Iowa. His political principles harmonise as well with the Iowa Republican platforms as with the South Carolina Democratic platforms.

He has consistently refused nomination for office where nomination is election, and men in position to know have said for publication that he could easily have been governor of South Carolina not many years ago.

This chapter of the biography of this man, as important as any other chapter, because he is almost as much a publicist as an evangelistic preacher after all, may be ended with some sentence epigrams from his sermons bearing upon the science and art of that good government which is so near and so dear to his heart. They

will show his breadth of view and depth of thought—a breadth and depth which distinguish the patriotic statesman from the selfish, office seeking politician. They generally touch upon themes not included in longer quotations given here, and thus they throw some sidelights upon the political science approved by the man himself. A few selected at random follow:

The government of a country never gets ahead of the religion of that country.

Give all power to the many and they will oppress the few; give all power to the few and they will oppress the many.

Government must be more or less the reflex of the soul of our people.

We must stop using men and women to make money and go to using money to make men and women.

We have too much discontent that vents itself in mere complaining and too little effort to remedy conditions.

God forbid that this country should prostitute her scepter of power for the clanking of silver and the rattling of gold.

A nation can be no greater than the men who compose it.

We are suffering from alien indigestion, and it is acute.

This country is going to be run by Americans and not by a foreign brood of vultures from southern Europe with the malodors of the steerage on their carcass.

The world owes a man nothing that he does not earn.

That last candid confession of faith explains a lot of paradoxes in the characteristics of Baxter F. McLendon and his activities, aside of being near the nucleus of his political thought.

After Destiny had threaded the loom with ancestral forces brought from Scotland and Ireland and carried straight through generations of McLendons and Swans and Richardsons and the other clans—after currents of the winds blowing over the plantations and towns and swamps of South Carolina, the coal mines of Ohio, and the college campuses of Kentucky and Illinois had swayed the threads and sometimes tangled them—then God continued His powerful task and fashioned out of that fabric a handiwork that men call an evangelist and set that man upon his travels along the road to great things.

In the beginning, it was a rough and rugged road, and sometimes the young man appeared ragged to the dignified, fashionably dressed people he accosted on the way.

He kept on in the middle of the road, past all obstacles, after many rebuffs, urged forward by powerful forces surging in his being with tremendous power.

The most dynamic, controlling the others, filling his mind and heart, was that call to preach which had dominated him for many years; since his conversion that October evening, it had guided every movement he had made and had been the objective of his life. Another was the urge of youth to get to work at once. Others were that restless energy with which he had been imbued from childhood, an industry instilled in him by his parents, a faith in success, not only the one grounded in the divine call, but a purely logical one founded in his knowledge of his own abilities and an optimism that expected the churches and all churchmen to welcome into their ranks another energetic, orthodox, earnest, consecrated preacher thrilled with his message.

The keen, enthusiastic and strong determination that filled him from the day of his conversion and had carried him through the toil and tribulation of three years in formal schools never left him for an hour; only such a determination, backed by such a tremendous force as that call to preach, could have kept him on the straight path to his goal during the succeeding several years after he felt ready to begin his life work.

It did just that, but those succeeding several years carry a story of as many obstacles and as much laborious suffering as often falls to the lot of mortal man. It was the period of his martyrdom and that persecution without which he says the church can not succeed—perhaps without it he could not have succeeded in the large way he did.

He had joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, a week after his conversion, fully decided to become a good member of that denomination. When he returned from his last term of school at Moody Institute, he felt ready to enter the ordained ministry of his denomination, and at once he began the preliminary steps to that end according to the polity of that church. The doorway to the South Carolina conference, the unit of organization of its ministry, was the passing of an examination, equivalent to that passed by neophytes in the law, in medicine and other professions. The first examination to be taken was one by the district conference of the Florence district, in which he lived and had his church membership.

He took that district conference examination and when the two ministers appointed to examine him told him he had passed a good examination and would have no trouble in entering the South Carolina conference, the rest of the way in seemed largely formal to him. It was not

easy, apparently because there is so much human nature in folks, something that he never seems to understand, although his whole successful career depends upon his working upon that same human nature.

He went to the meeting of the South Carolina conference at Abbeville expecting to walk through that door of the examination into a seat among its members and be welcomed as one of the Methodist ministers of his state. He was dazed to find the door staying locked against him and that his key would not unlock it. There is no record of that examination, as of a college examination, and the only record is a report of the examiners which failed to say he had passed it.

"I believe to this day that I passed as good an examination as any of the fifteen or twenty that they accepted," he said some years later, and he still believes it.

There is no reason to doubt that fact, viewed in an academic sense, and if one surveys the whole situation at that time, there is nothing surprising in the other fact that he was not accepted as a member by that conference.

That assembly of routine, dignified, self respecting, highly respected Methodist ministers had fixed habits and ideas of their own. Among these were definite formulas for the appearance, actions and methods of preachers which a century had crystalised into something as hard as porphyry. To be admitted to their body of ministers, one must conform more or less to the ideals they supported; to act in contravention to those fixed ideas would make a preacher as much out of place in that organization of ministers as a Zulu prince in a London drawing room. The examination was not entirely academic in scope, and not confined entirely to religion, orthodoxy, doctrines and theology; it was for the very purpose of determining whether the candidate was fitted in every

way to become one of themselves, and that fitness had several facets to be considered.

The candidate who was plucked at Abbeville that day had been a very wild youth of sensational escapades before his conversion; since his conversion he had been a student in two schools who fit into neither of them very well; his attempts to preach had in the beginning been superlative failures, and finally they were successful only in bringing many penitents to the altar and converts to Christ, but not in the sense of being sermons that are sermons; he preached in a new manner, sensational in the minds of the humdrum other preachers, different from anything ever seen before—albeit not fundamentally different from the preaching of Peter Cartright, Lorenzo Dow and some other famous Methodists, but the South Carolina conference did not think of that, or felt it had outgrown it. Worse than all, he gave promise of becoming more so, and that to them meant becoming worse, as he gained experience by practice. A holy horror is what he appeared to be to some of the staid and reverend gentlemen of the cloth whom he asked to admit him among themselves as one of them.

But the young candidate for ministerial status had not the least glimmering of any understanding of all that, as he confidently entered the examination. When he was told on his way to the church where the examination of candidates was to be held, that his own Bennettsville pastor, and his own presiding elder, the latter a brother of the bishop presiding at that very conference session, were opposed to his admission, he did not believe it and could not believe it. When the same informant said the opposition of those two men from his home part of the state was sufficient to prevent his acceptance, he could not believe that either. Always impatient and reckless

of the smaller things that really determine the fate of lovers, business, nations and humanity, that warning was far beneath his conception of his cosmos. It will be remembered that from the very first, the ministers then in Bennettsville opposed his attempting to become a preacher, and it was the laity who enabled him to go to college and prepare for his ministry.

Looking at the whole picture in Abbeville that day of the annual conference, nobody with a little knowledge of things as they are, regardless of what they ought to be, would feel much surprise that this one candidate was not accepted into that assembly. But to the idealistic young candidate, it was a terrible shock, a wound in the spirit from which he has never fully recovered. He was hurt intensely and chiefly; there was only a mere spark of righteous indignation then, but this grew into a coal of fire later.

He had the sympathy of the Rev. Dr. E. O. Watson and the Reverend Mr. Owens who had examined him at the district conference at Florence, and they exerted themselves in his behalf. Baxter F. McLendon was still on the rolls in orders below that of ordained minister, and was eligible and authorised to preach to congregations without a pastor, or on invitation by pastors. What he wanted, and nobody ever desired anything more, was work to do in the Lord's vineyard.

His two ministerial friends of his district conference obtained for him a church to which no pastor had been appointed in the eastern edge of Columbia, the state capital, called Edgewood. He served that church for two years to its satisfaction, whatever lack of sympathy remained in the powers that were in the South Carolina annual conference.

He preached in his own way, being himself, the only

way he knew and the only way that was worth while for him to preach. He attracted by his broad human sympathy and direct methods of reaching the lowest of the lowly in morals the attention of the chaplain of the penitentiary on the other side of the city and was often invited to preach to the convicts. He held his congregations and brought in some who had not been attending any church. He attained power as a preacher, and converted sinners. Some of his converts are themselves useful and vigorous ministers today. Looking at his work there judicially and in the perspective of the years, it seems to have been very successful for a young preacher with little experience to accomplish in two years.

He was gaining in strength, of course, by the exercise that work gave him in his new vocation. His experiences there, all pleasant, gave him insights and connotations he never had before. He learned, most of all and best of all, the necessity for continual study and application in a preacher, and this was in parallel with the habits he had already formed. Those two years at Edgewood benefited the young preacher, even as it furnished manna to his flock. They ended in another shock that would have caused most men to despair. But this one was Scotch-Irish, and there was that call to preach which of course was not limited to a biennium.

He had a right to think that his work during those two years, acceptably to the Edgewood church and fruitful in results, might make the South Carolina conference look on him with a different expression than that when it refused to admit him to its elect. He was justified in having hopes of being admitted and given a regular pastorate at the annual conference that autumn. Without a word the annual conference simply ignored him; it did not reject him, nor take any other notice of him; it filled

the pastorates, including that at Edgewood, gave out the list of appointments, regular pastorates on stations or circuits, special details for work, and supply preachers, but the name of Baxter F. McLendon was nowhere on any list. He simply disappeared from the ken of the conference. If they had taken any action and had given him a chance to defend himself, he would have had some satisfaction in the fight. But their method precluded anything in him except the numbness of shell shock. To make it complete, he was later told that his name was not even mentioned in the cabinet of the bishop, the body of presiding elders who are the advisors of the episcopacy in the Methodist church.

It is foolish to see in this backward glance that the method of ignoring him was the masterly diplomacy of those who subtly contrived it as the thing which would wound him most; probably none of them were that resourceful and brilliant. One is justified in guessing that they had found the young man such an enigma that they could not forecast the effect of any action they might take upon him and themselves, and hence more in fear than in cruelty did not touch him, nor even look at him.

The shock was greater than they, or many other people since, have understood. But he never lost faith, or rather confidence in the fact, in that call to preach. Even his self controlled, superbly sensible and womanly wise little wife was stunned at first; doubtless she was wondering where food was to come from without income, while Baxter himself thought only of the lack of opportunity to preach.

The events of succeeding years makes us see clearly what probably was only a mere impression in the minds of the members of the annual conference of that time, if indeed they analysed it at all. Looking backward at

the facts, one may reason out what would have been the subsequent history of Baxter McLendon, if he had been duly admitted to the conference and regularly assigned to a pastorate on its rolls. Present day knowledge of the man, and an intensive study of him, makes it seem very clear that as a regular member of the conference he would have functioned thus:

Naturally and by routine, he would at first have been sent to small, weak circuits. He would have strengthened these as much as any agency could do, but nobody could lift them beyond their own potentialities. He would have worked enthusiastically at first; and later would have preached at his regular appointments with honest zeal to do his whole duty—when that duty was rather narrow and easy. In those appointments, including what are colloquially called cotton mill and backwoods or hardscrabble churches, he would have taken on the color of his environment to considerable degree; he would have hunted with his parishioners and have been the counselor of poor tenant farmers; he would have fulfilled perfectly the modern idea of a pastor coalescing with his flock and shepherding them in all sociological affairs as well as in religion; but in doing this, he would have brought himself to their level instead of standing on a hill to direct them. He would have had the same grade of appointments to the same kind of churches all his life and would have attained the lowest grade of South Carolina Methodist ministers.

Today, it is almost impossible to conceive of him as the more or less permanent pastor of a fixed congregation and church. The qualities that make an evangelist prevent one from being a good pastor, as the characteristics of a novelist do not conduce to commerce success.

It is very clear today that the whole incident should

greatly strengthen one's belief that God doeth all things well, however mysterious His ways, and however castigating His blessings seem sometimes to poor mortals. Baxter McLendon did not realise this then and continued to struggle along the rugged road in the same direction he had marked out for his course.

"I wrote every Methodist preacher in the state, I believe, asking if he couldn't give me work to do, and with one accord they answered, Nay! Nay! Every time I heard of a preacher's death or a vacancy in any district, I would jump on a train and hurry to the presiding elder and implore him to give me the vacancy"—thus he described years afterward his efforts to get into a pulpit immediately after that efficient dropping of him by the annual conference. Schoolboys putting one of their number into coventry could give no points to the Methodist ministers of South Carolina just then. This lasted from the session of the conference in November until the next May, a long half year, with that obsessing call to preach aided by industrious efforts to obtain a place to preach, before the last surcease came. Then the tide turned, as the tide always does, almost imperceptibly.

An aged Baptist minister, the Rev. Edward Covington, who lived at Greenville, asked Baxter McLendon to hold a meeting for him at Mountville, and after that in other places, and these meetings occupied the young preacher for nearly a year. He had become an evangelist. After all, in the better light of this later day, the coventry that the South Carolina annual conference had put Baxter F. McLendon into was an eldorado rich in successful work for righteousness. Perhaps the refusal of that conference to make him a pastor of station or circuit was the one best event in his life however calamitous it appeared at the time. Certainly his own faith that God

would find a way for him to fulfill that potent call to preach was justified later.

His preaching during that year was so successful as to attract attention from those who had only contempt for him previously. There was a new presiding elder of the Florence district back home, the Rev. Peter Stokes, who seems to have had no prejudices about the manner of preaching, if it was preaching blessed by the Lord. At any rate, he sent for the embryo evangelist, a year later —the intervening year had been spent holding a few meetings for a Methodist minister and preaching in backwoods churches and at cotton mill settlements.

And so, two years after that ostracism at the conference, Baxter F. McLendon was back in his home, preaching in Methodist pulpits on invitation from Methodist ministers. He preached in his own way, was simply himself in the pulpit, and in one year added about a thousand new members to Methodism in that one district. He was sought after to hold meetings, and all the antagonism—or fear of him—seemed to have disappeared. It never appeared again, in the same way, and the young preacher was very happy in his work. He had arrived. The evolution of an evangelist from a wild barber was complete. After worrying through his apprenticeship and being bruised and starved as a journeyman, he had become a master workman for the Lord.

Being what he is and always has been, sensitive to friendly acts and with a big, warm heart, the change in the ministers from aloof ignoring of an interloper to cordial friendliness toward a brother also made him happy; the world was roseate in hue during the two or three years that followed. Every meeting he held was a success measured by results; young men were being converted by hundreds and going into the ministry by doz-

ens; churches in which he preached were jammed by great congregations which yielded thousands of converts; church organizations were being enlivened and quickened and made more spiritual.

Such results caused a widespread desire for his services all over his state. Instead of harrying presiding elders to give him an opportunity to preach to fill vacancies, he was explaining why and how he could not be in ten places at one time and forced to decline nine out of ten calls for his meetings, while his engagement list ran a dozen places ahead of his services, a long waiting list of engagements to hold revivals. And the ministers had made a right-about face. They no longer looked askance at him as a preacher, no longer questioned his ability to be a preacher, no longer advised him to go back to his razor and scissors in his old barber shop. They vied with one another in praising his quality as a preacher of the Word.

"The safest and sanest evangelist that I know of," one presiding elder wrote after the evangelist had gotten into his stride—and one may be forgiven a smile when he reads that after a study of the fearsome boycotting of a few years before based on the idea that this safest and sanest evangelist was a sort of insane and very unsafe preacher to put into a pulpit. The evangelist and preacher had not changed an iota, but the viewpoint of the observers had been moved through a large arc.

No man could hold the revivals that Baxter F. McLendon was conducting and produce the results in them that he was doing without attracting attention not only from the churchmen, but from the whole populace saint and sinner alike—and all that meant that his successes became news of high value. His sermons, being meaty as well as picturesque, were given wider publicity through

the newspapers of his state which to this day devote more space to serious things than to crime and accidents. Some of his sentences are epigramatic, and many of his paragraphs are gems that may be isolated from their context to fill a hole in a newspaper form. So, naturally and inevitably, but without the least press agenting by himself, Baxter F. McLendon began to occupy a good deal of newspaper space in South Carolina, and his portrait was handy on the desk of a good many editors. This state of affairs led to what is perhaps the most interesting phase of a varied career—interesting because distinctly and thoroughly human in all its facets, rather than because it had much permanent effect on the evangelist, the church, or anything else.

"I thought my brethren would be most tickled to death to see that one in their ranks was getting the publicity that I was," he says with a naivete that is delicious, and a sincerity as rare as it is creditable to himself. In the midst of that spotlight glare kept on him by the press of his native state, his thought was not of any egotistical honor being paid him, but pleasure that he was doing something to raise the position of the clergy in public estimation; and he thought the rest of the clergy would get equal pleasure from the portraits and sermons of one of their number being broadcast so generously by the newspapers!

It is incomprehensible—and the fact is the more interesting because so impossible to understand—that there should be such ignorance of human nature in a successful poker player turned into a very successful preacher and evangelist. There is documentary evidence that he actually thought the ministers of his state preaching several times every Sunday, traveling circuits, marrying and burying, for scanty salaries even when the stipend was

all paid, and without the least appreciation by public approval, except a donation party by their congregations once in a while, would be overjoyed to see that the newspapers were playing up Baxter McLendon, the cyclone evangelist, and giving his work and sayings as much space as they gave the actions and words of the governor of the state. He ignored the human nature in folks, and the other principle that preachers are as human and as much entitled to have human nature as anybody else—and to give them much pleasure, he sent copies of papers containing spreads about himself to every preacher in the state!

"I found out that instead of making friends, it made me enemies," he remarks wryly some time later in a tone that indicates that even yet he does not understand the reactions of those preachers he was trying to make happier by a realization that the cloth at last was being made the equal of the togâ by the newspapers.

The echoes of the newspaper paeans of praise were not long in coming back to him. The configuration of circumstances concentrated them at Greenville, in the Piedmont section of the state, site of an old college, a really important city in South Carolina. For awhile it sounded like the town was being bombarded, as arguments were loudly proclaimed, factions fought, and both town and gown were drawn into the fight—which those same newspapers joyously reported as real news, being a fight on the evangelist they had made a prominent citizen of their commonwealth.

Three Greenville pastors, the Rev. A. E. Holler, of St. Paul's Methodist church, the Rev. Dr. B. D. Hahn, of the Baptist persuasion, and the Rev. Dr. Davis, of the Presbyterian communion, united in asking the evangelist to hold a meeting in that part of the city of Greenville con-

taining their church edifices. Baxter McLendon accepted their invitation for a union meeting, shipped there his big circus tent to hold it in, and had it erected all ready for the first service on a Sunday. He himself arrived on Saturday and found Greenville gabbling about the opposition to him enunciated by five Methodist ministers. As usual, trouble surprised Baxter McLendon, and especially there and then, for he had supposed all the Methodist ministers were feeling bully about his own success as a preacher, and he one of themselves, a Methodist minister! "I don't believe I was ever more surprised in my life," he says.

The five Methodist ministers had for their tactics of opposition a signed pronunciamento stating that they would not go to hear this evangelist preach and asking their congregations to remain away from the tent meetings. In actual effect on the attendance at his meetings, this only increased it, of course, but the further tactics of the opposition did make some bother for the revival the three pastors had planned jointly. The principal signers of the proclamation of war were the Rev. Dr. Mark Carlisle, presiding elder of that district, and the Rev. Pierce C. Kilgoe, then pastor of a prominent boulevard church in Greenville and the same man who had been presiding elder in the old movement to keep Baxter F. McLendon out of the South Carolina annual conference, an episode that had been forgotten by nearly everybody. The other signers of the paper were of lesser importance, some pastors of circuits of small churches and preachers in the villages of the textile factory operatives.

The Rev. Dr. Kilgoe, who seems to have started the rumpus at Greenville, must be credited with being a fighter when he started anything. The college campus was a convenient site for the evangelist's big tent, close

to all three churches joining in the revival; the Rev. Dr. Kilgoe promptly protested to the college authorities against allowing the revival to be held on the campus, because his church had members living near there; the college did not want to become involved in any church fight, of course, and the tone of the Rev. Dr. Kilgoe's letter indicated that it was a real fight that impended or had started.

Nobody had asked these opposers of the revival to endorse it, but they wrote to the newspapers that they would not endorse it nor have anything to do with it. One of them a few weeks later stopped Baxter McLendon in the street and apologised for his signature on the various documents issued by the quintet, saying his conscience had hurt him ever since he signed them. But the leaders showed no compunctions. They telegraphed all over the state to ministers asking whether Baxter McLendon had their endorsement; they kept the newspapers supplied with war correspondence; they raised a merry hullaballoo.

Meantime, the evangelist was not fighting alone. The proper committee of the union meeting he was holding also telegraphed to ministers asking how much they endorsed Baxter McLendon, and published the favorable replies. The tent meeting had large audiences, including most of the parishioners of the opposing preachers, of course, and it continued for six or seven weeks to a successful conclusion. That tempest in the Piedmont teapot does not seem to have injured his cause any; but it did have a good deal to do with the direction of his future actions.

It happens that the Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians nearly monopolize the church work in the Carolinas. In South Carolina, the Methodist ministers were, to say

the least, pacifists as regards the fight some of the leaders were making on this evangelist and did not want to add fuel to the flames of war; others were discreetly conscious of the power of the presiding elder over the destinies of the pastors; still others were merely disgusted; some were actually indifferent. None felt like inviting Baxter F. McLendon to hold a revival for him, when there was much more chance of peace by inviting some other revivalist. In the next ten years, he himself says, they severely let him alone.

It was in the matter of union meetings that the crises really arose. Sometimes every minister in a town would want Baxter F. McLendon to come to hold a joint revival there, except the Methodist pastors who would object so strenuously that somebody else would be chosen. The Presbyterians and Baptists generally if not unanimously supported the evangelism of McLendon as much as the Methodists opposed it—referring to the ministry of the denominations named, for the laity seem to have taken little active interest in the affair, although insofar as they expressed themselves they were practically all in favor of the evangelist and his meetings.

There was also a canon law of the Methodist church forbidding any other preacher officiating except on invitation of a minister and pastor at the place of preaching.

All these things made it difficult, not to say impossible, for Baxter F. McLendon to evangelise much in South Carolina. His home was only a dozen miles from the North Carolina line. So he "just eased over into North Carolina," hoping the tempest in his own state would blow over soon and to avoid all possible sources of friction which might strike sparks again.

Harking back in their beginning to the suave and courteous Sir Walter Raleigh, rather than the brusque

highlanders, the people of North Carolina welcomed the immigrant evangelist without qualification. Methodist ministers there were his admirers and seem to have been without jealousy. Leaders in that annual conference gave public expression to their respect for his talents and his power as a preacher. He was again in peaceful fields, holding great meetings, converting more thousands. He worked in North Carolina for three or four years, constantly growing in reputation and strength as a preacher, constantly improving by practice as a pulpit orator, constantly adding to the number of his friends.

In North Carolina in this era the flower came into full bloom; it spread over into Virginia and West Virginia; it took root in Oklahoma and in Texas; it blossomed beautifully in California; it grew finer every year. Baxter F. McLendon had graduated from a revivalist of local reputation in one state and denomination, to be an evangelist of national reputation preaching in union meetings for all denominations. Every attempt to lessen his influence or inhibit his work resulted only in making him more powerful and of wider scope as a force for good and the gospel.

He himself has no question as to why all attempts to harm him aided him. He succinctly sums it all up in this paragraph in one of his sermons:

For all these years I have had to climb mountains of obstacles and meet all kinds of subtle opposition and overcome difficulties of every conceivable form, but I have stood on God's promises: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. The Lord is my helper." Following Christ you may discover a gold mine of ability you never dreamed you possessed.

## A RECIPE FOR PREACHERS

No man ever lives precisely by his own yardstick of conduct. It is valuable at times to compare one's own performance with the pattern of one's own model, in any calling or profession. It is interesting to hunt out the model some other man has set up for himself and see the difference between that and what the man really is in his performance.

Baxter McLendon has very clear cut ideas about what a preacher ought to be and to do. It is worth while to see just what is his formula for a preacher of the gospel, in his own mind.

He does not believe a preacher should pose. He has learned how little force there is in a manner put on and off like a coat. He has said many times and in many places:

"When God calls a man to preach, He expects him to do it as naturally as he eats, sleeps, drinks, sneezes or snores."

He has had his full share of that opposition from routinists directed against all free lance evangelists who are working in the way that is natural to them, and the only manner in which most of them could accomplish much. He found what is called sensationalism by many good people to be natural to him, and determined not to worry about that. But he has paid enough attention to the complainants to state clearly his views on the matter. In fact he has a whole sermon with that sort of title. Pertinent extracts from it tell us the place socalled sensationalism has in his recipe for the making of a preacher. He argues by precedents:

Elijah had the sand to be himself, and he was not tied down and dominated by the personality of some other

preacher. . . . . Jeremiah was a sensationalist. He lay down in the gutter to attract the attention of the people. . . . . The Bible is full of things out of the common. Don't discard them, because they happen to be a little sensational. It was sensational when Jonah had his three days experience in the belly of the whale and then rushed down the streets covered with dry seaweed. . . . . The first time Jesus went into a synagogue down in Nazareth after beginning his ministry, He created a big sensation. . . . It was sensational when the four men were so solicitous and interested in their friend that they took him up on a housetop and let him down through the roof, so that Jesus could heal him of the palsy. . . . . Savonarola was a sensational preacher. . . . . John Huss was a sensational preacher. . . . . John the Baptist was a sensational preacher. . . . . So help me God, I'm going to preach the way He intended me to and as I understand it, and what you think about it cuts no ice with your Uncle Mack.

So after all, his defense of socalled sensationalism is really a claim that each preacher should be natural in the pulpit and his oratorical methods. There is in him no trace of approbation of sensationalism adopted as a method and put on as a pose; but when a preacher, in being entirely natural, violates the canons of custom, or good taste, or the King's English, the naturalness excuses the breaches, he opines. And on the other hand, his strong contempt for pose and play acting makes him abhor that sensationalism which is carefully adopted for the pulpit and worn there more or less like a pair of trousers wrong side before.

He intensely believes that a preacher should hew to the line with utter disregard of where the chips fall. In all things, he delves to the bottom of the well to find the truth where the old Greek said it is always hidden; in his politics he tests all things by the constitution; in religion, he tests all things by the truth, and he believes

every preacher should never shy away from that basic truth, however easier some other way may be. For instance:

People, if there was ever a time in the history of this world that we need preachers with backbone and moral stamina and grit to stand and cry aloud and preach the gospel, and reprove and rebuke, and fight false doctrines and isms and schisms, this is the day!

Because he has no faintest shadow of doubt about the eternal verities of the christian religion, and is certain that if its basic truths are preached and taught exactly as they exist, they will be triumphant, he rather favors the minister debating them with their opponents, for:

I think a good free, open, and above board discussion of the fundamental truths of the Word of God is always good and cannot hurt the truth.

Our Lord was engaged in one debate right after another with the scribes and Pharisees. In this day we do not meet error face to face and grapple with it as we should.

That he should insist upon courage in the pulpit almost goes without saying. Referring to the denunciations delivered by Elijah, he said:

If some preachers would talk that plain to the big crooks in their churches, it wouldn't be long before standing room would be at a premium. Too much of our preaching doesn't excite one emotion for good, or bring one shadow of condemnation. Give us the kind of preaching which describes the state of the heart, character of life, and peril of the soul, which arouses the moral slumberer and makes the sinner feel that he is facing the blazing light and scorching presence of God's purity, and makes the backslider see that he is a liar and has proved a traitor and a Benedict Arnold to God and the church.

A concomitant of that courage is definition of denunciation, and—

The preaching that is clothed in mysticism and shrouded in fog and served in philosophical terms, has about as

much effect on the sinners and church crooks, as a popgun would have throwing peas at Pikes Peak.

Approaching this theme from the negative side, he makes no secret of his opinion of one kind of preachers pandering to congregations who—

Believe in a quiet religion and like sermons that soothe them; they want to be patted on the back and have their chins tickled, and their heads patted, and caressed; they demand decency and order in worship. . . . . They protest against excitement; they tell us of their popular pastor who is instructing them with his sociological sermons, informing them with his lectures and blackboard illustrations, and delighting them with his talks on his travels in foreign lands—

When what that congregation really needs is a preacher who will:

Make sin appear as sin and hold them up before the blazing light . . . . and preach hell hot, sin black, life short and death certain and eternity long, and call them to a realization of a blood-bought redemption, and pull the veneer off their rottenness and hold them up before the blazing light of God Almighty's holiness.

The physician, engineer, or accountant on the witness stand who makes a deep or complicated technical thing plainly understood by the ordinary jury knows his subject thoroughly and much better than the superficial poseur who tries to give an impression of knowledge by using big words. This preacher wishes all preachers knew the plan of salvation so intensively that they could tell it simply to their audiences as he tries to do, in this fashion:

I have tried to preach the gospel so simple and so plain that if there was an unfortunate human that would drop into the service who had never heard a gospel sermon before in his life, and should never hear another one, he could learn enough about God's word, God's Son and God's plan of salvation to know how to be saved.

Of course to accomplish that, the preacher has no time to wander among the poppies of No Man's Land, nor even to be very analytical in his main thesis. This one recognizes that when he says:

There is no question about the power of the gospel to save. The great need of the twentieth century is a consecrated ministry which will, without modifications, or reservations, or evasions, proclaim the gospel.

He frequently mentions by name preachers he approves, among them William and Catherine Booth, Sam Jones, Chapman, Dr. John Hall, Dwight L. Moody, Charles G. Finney, and others. Continuing his characterization of what a preacher ought to be, he says once:

There are three indispensable qualifications that go into the making of the true minister of the gospel. First, he must be sure that he has a knowable, feelable, tellable, seeable, tasteable case of oldtime, backwoods calico religion. He must be sure of his personal christian experience. Second, he must be sure that God called him, and not his ma or pa or kinfolks or neighbors. Third, he must be filled and thrilled and charged and inundated and electrified with the message.

There is constant recurrence to the idea that only by persecution and travail can christianity succeed, and that this involves nearness to God is told in this paragraph:

A great French preacher once said there are two things necessary to genius: God and a dungeon. And it may be said with certainty that we can have neither strong christian character nor spiritual force unless we are much alone with God. Prayer is the hand that grasps the omnipotent hand. When that hand is strong, the whole life is strong; when that hand is weak, the whole life is weak. The men in whose lives has developed a great prayer passion have been the men who have moved the world.

The work of the preacher should attract the attention

of others for its own sake, he believes, and he says frankly:

The preacher should be the most generally discussed man in town. He ought to set the folks talking. This is no time for compromise, for dodging issues, or modifying the message. The churches are in great distress. This is the time for a vigorous gospel, preached by a spirit filled ministry who give the people the word of the Lord in the power of the spirit. . . . . Let us stand on the wall as God's watchmen and describe the state of the heart, the character of life and the peril of the soul and preach hell hot, life short, death certain and eternity long.

His own exclusion of controversial topics from his evangelical sermons is reflected in his advice to other preachers like this:

The preacher must remember that it is not his mission to give to men his opinions, or proclaim his notions and views with reference to Biblical discussions or supposed modern discoveries. He is a messenger and it is his mission to proclaim the word of the Lord. . . . .

We need to substitute the challenging tones of truth for cowardly and prudish reserve. We need to speak out. We need knowledge of the secret enemies of our homes. These evils feed on silence and grow by stealth, and we ought today as God's messengers tell the whole truth and not compromise with evil.

The overwhelming need of the hour is spirit filled, blood washed, fire baptised messengers of God with divine fire burning in their souls, to unmask these devices of the devil, and to tear down the strongholds of satan, whether in high places or low. God deliver us from those animated question marks who are standing up in their pulpits and satisfying themselves with defending denominational redoubts, spinning theological theories, propounding pious platitudes, splitting hairs, whittling nothing off to a point, reeling off lavender scented, rosewater, rhetorical bouquets, when the very fire of hell is raging all around them in palaces and hovels and amusement centers.

But with all this positivism in his formula for a perfect preacher, and recalling his tendency toward debate, he is as emphatic about teaching by the apologetic method as about denunciations of sin. In one of his sermons he devotes a good deal of time to this topic, thus:

I believe that the truth should be both promoted and defended. . . . . From Pentecost until the present day, every man that has moved this old world Godward, Christward and Heavenward has used the apologetic or defense method. Peter said to 'Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you. How? 'With meekness and fear.' . . . .

Now, do not misunderstand me. Not all preaching should be apologetic. In many cases the positive method is better. It depends upon circumstances and conditions as to the right plan to be pursued. If a preacher has no infidels, modernists, liberals, rationalists, or doubters in his congregation, he should not spend his time shooting at people who are not present.

As to the method of defending the faith, his advice to ministers of the gospel is all summed up in a couple of apothegms:

Faith makes you invulnerable and invincible. A holy life is the best answer that can be made to the modernist, the liberalist, or the Twentieth century, camouflaged infidels of today. The Bible is not only up-to-date, but ahead of date.

The effect of the minister's daily life on his efficiency as a preacher is fully realised by this man of much experience with many kinds of people. What he says to converts, he applies with much more emphasis to preachers:

You can not consider the effect on yourself alone; you must look out for others. It may not hurt you to do various things but you must look out for the effect it has on others. You and I are here to break the bands, and not to tie them around our brother.

His model preacher in this respect is Paul who said to the converted idolator: "If eating meat makes you stumble

I will eat no meat." Incidentally, this is almost the only place where this evangelist includes the family of the minister in the specifications for a good preacher—and that includes his own family. With sons in college and a daughter in high school, in this era of youth rampant, he has uniquely sensible, buoyant, fun loving, typical youth in his own family, and they are withal very modern youth. With his own children jazz music and silk stockings, unchaperoned dates and basketball trips, for his daughter and harmless adventures and wide liberty of action for his sons are not taboo—but he has impressed upon them that the limitations for the children of a preacher are nearer the old customs and conventionalities than those restricting the sons and daughters of other people; that for them the hem of the skirt must be nearer the ground, the bathing suit must contain more material, the riding costume be a little less mannish, the petting parties more rare, the man-of-the-world attitude less pronounced, the flaunting of conventions with arrogant display stopped. It happens that his children have been so brought up by their mother, and so impressed by their father, that he has had little difficulty in convincing them of this dictum, and they always obey it cheerfully, however much they feel the injustice of the demand by the public that preacher's children should be better boys and girls than anybody else's children.

The human nature in folks, he believes should be recognised, rather than combated, by the preacher, not only as regards the stricter code of conduct for the whole family of the minister, but in everything pertaining to the religious life. For instance, different temperaments require different spiritual pabulum, for—

Men are religious animals. There is a religious nature that craves assemblies of religious character and the

mere forms of outward worship. As the intellectual nature desires schools, colleges, and literature, their religious nature wants a place to attend on the Sabbath. The unconverted enjoy having churches in their community, and renting a pew, and being on the boards of churches, but the carnal mind does not care to be pious. It is satisfied with church going, choir singing, ritualism and formalism. A beaver wants its dam; so there is a spiritual beaver. In proportion as the church loses spiritual life, it increases in formalism and ritualism.

It is apparent by this time that the Reverend Mr. McLendon puts a good deal of responsibility upon ministers of the gospel, and he feels his own responsibility to the full, not only to his congregations and the communities in which he works, but especially to the converts he makes in such large numbers. His obligations to the converts he feels as strictly and as strongly as those obligations he imposes upon them in a final sermon of a revival. Amid the temptations that come to a preacher, especially a very human minister, as well as to the layman, perhaps the strongest deterrent he has to keep him in the middle of a straight and narrow path is the effect that the least misstep to one side or the other would have on his converts scattered all over the United States. He seldom or never talks about this responsibility itself, and about the only reference to it in his public utterances is a simple sentence, but a heartfelt exclamation: "How solemn is our responsibility as ministers!"

Certainly he does not go up and down the land telling other preachers what they should do, nor harping upon their duties, methods, or responsibilities in a critical spirit. In fact, everything he has said publicly about preachers has been casually and parenthetically in the midst of a paragraph in a sermon on another topic. To discover what these have been, in order to compose his

formula for a minister, his recipe for an ideal preacher, it was necessary to search carefully through many sermons, to find a sentence here and another there which might throw light upon his ideas about them, like those quoted in this chapter.

His denunciations, it will be noted, are always for the congregations and churches, and never for the pastors for whom he shows nothing but sympathy always. That he knows a good deal about the tribulations of a pastor is indicated in this section of his sermon to new converts:

Cooperate with your pastor; hold up his hands. God has appointed the pastor to be a shepherd over the church, and you should give him due reverence and seek to assist him with his plans for the welfare of the church. Just about every pastor in the land has trouble with a God forsaken lot of would be bellwethers that believe strictly in the minority rule, and if they can not rule, they ruin.

If anything is said about raising the pastor's salary, be sure to object. A preacher and his family do not need anything; they are supposed to sleep on clotheslines, be clothed in sunshine and eat wind. If you happen to have any discarded furniture you do not need and can not dispose of, be sure to send it around to the parsonage; the preacher and his family will of course appreciate it. Keep them on starvation wages, because that will keep them humble, and what little you do promise to pay him, let it always be like pulling teeth when you have to give it up, and let him know you give it reluctantly.

If everything is running along nice and smooth, jump right up and start something.

He comes actively to the defense of the pastors a little further along when referring to the constant intimations to him that the person speaking would go to church more, if it had for its pastor as good a preacher as Baxter F. McLendon. That caused this very frank avowal:

Well he doesn't have much to do, only make two sermons a week, one prayer meeting talk, visit everybody in the community, look after the sick and bury the dead.

Right here, I want to say that there is no preacher on earth, no matter how talented and gifted he is, who can make two good sermons a week. People forget that an evangelist can manufacture seventy-five or a hundred sermons, and that he preaches them in every town that he goes into. There are evangelists now going up and down the land who have not made a new sermon in years; but if one of your pastors dared to preach a sermon twice in one year from the same text, all the dear old sisters would have something to talk about—and the brothers, too.

The hire of the laborer in the vineyard is referred to in that same sermon to converts in these words:

Young converts, let me beg of you, do not expect your preacher to work down here and board in heaven. A stingy christian can not be a growing christian. God's command is to pay one-tenth of what you make, and the churches are giving one-sixth of one percent. . . . . Remember that you can not outgive God.

With considerable difficulty, and some labor, this brief of what Baxter F. McLendon thinks about preachers has been worked out from the candid record made by him when he was more or less off guard, in the throes of delivery of sermons on a variety of other topics. Its comparison with his own attributes as a preacher proves that he approaches in his own life and work remarkably close to his own ideal.

The sermonising of this evangelist is easily analysed and described, because it is of essentially simple pattern, and it thoroughly represents the personality of the man's dominant traits. He has completely recovered, and indeed recovered very soon, from the erroneous idea he says he had in the beginning of his preaching.

"I made the mistake of seeing myself as a big preacher, instead of just being myself," he says now with a glint of humor in his eye.

He soon became convinced that the call to preach did not mean that he would be furnished with a portfolio of sermons and a new voice and tongue with which to deliver them. So he went to work to learn how to preach with the same determination and industrious energy that he had devoted in preparing to sell business guides some years before,—that is, to learn how he himself should preach, not any general formulas for preaching. He had got some of the latter in Moody Institute and Asbury college, but naturally, while they helped him, they did not fit him any better than some suit of clothes made for the average man would do. One may imagine that he learned more about preaching—which is persuasion—while selling guides than from any teacher. But he learned to preach chiefly, as he has learned nearly everything, in the bitter school of experience.

One output of that dear school is the rather indefinite complex called common sense, and all his sermons are very full of that quality. Evidently he considers that common sense is the safeguard against overworking any theme for a sermon, any tenet of theology, any exuber-

ance of hobbies, or any method in delivery and pulpit manner. At any rate, it does prevent those things in his pulpit work, and especially in the construction of his sermons.

The theology in them is uncompromising and soundly orthodox. It is not involved in statement, nor has it any twilight zones of doubt.

It starts with the inspiration of the Bible, and it does not recognise that there can be any real christianity, nor christian church, without this major premise to the whole argument for the whole cause. While he preaches an entire sermon on this theme often, it is so much the corner stone of all the rest, and it must be accepted as a principle and condition precedent so much in all his other theology, that it might be simply stated in a sentence here—the one keystone that supports the whole arch.

The authenticity of the Virgin birth, he admits is subject to argument—especially as argument will logically prove it. He has not the least shadow of doubt about that. In his sermons he uses it to build up the simple creed in them, as one of the stones which make the sublime building of the all powerful majesty of God.

The incarnation of God in Jesus the Christ is somewhat a matter of course in his sermons, as a corollary to the other two things mentioned above, and he does not reiterate it so much as do some preachers. In his sermons, while it is treated as a matter of course, it is considered a very important matter; indeed the most important thing in the history of humanity past, present, and future.

Redemption by means of the blood shed on Calvary is the topic coming to the front most often and most emphatically, almost necessarily in his evangelistic sermons. Here his innate courage and his strong will appear prominently. He scouts the idea that there are easier ways of being

saved, more flowery paths to salvation. He hews to the line. And since this is a line to be toed, he fulminates against all suggestions that anyone may walk around its end, jump over it, tiptoe in parallel with it, or stand off and merely look at it, as well as accurately place one's toes upon it. Here, as always in his sermons, he is uncompromising.

He believes in regeneration through the Holy Ghost as much as he believes the sun will rise in the east the next morning after his sermon is done. His own life and experience justify this. In one of his sermons he has this:

What I mean by the new birth is a radical transformation of our innermost nature. It is not a mere outward change, but a birth, a new birth. It is a new creation. The old things are passed away; behold they have become new! The new birth is a radical transformation in the deepest depths of our being, the impartation of a new nature, a new intellectual nature, a new emotional nature, a new volitional nature. It is an impartation of God's own nature to us. We become partakers of the divine nature.

In the new birth we get a new mind, a mind that is open to the truth of God, that thinks the thoughts of God after Him; we get new affections; we now love the things that God loves and hate the things that God hates. We get a new will—a resurrected will—a will that is in harmony with the will of God, a will that is set upon pleasing God and not set upon pleasing self.

Previously in that same sermon, he had been considering the uncompromising way of the Pharisee in outward correctness of life and praising that item in the components of the pharisees, going on to the difference between being right and getting right, and then:

There must be a regeneration in your soul. You may be baptized. Well, that is not synonymous with regeneration, and when I say baptism, I have reference to no

particular mode. Don't go away from here and say I am talking against baptism, because if you do, you lie.

Baptism is a scriptural ordinance, but baptismal regeneration is not a Bible doctrine. Baptism always has been accepted as the outward form of an inward grace.

In all his sermons there is an avoidance of things of lesser importance, but frequent controversy, which is so complete that it must be carefully planned. They are full of the essentials for salvation, emphatically, cogently and fully presented, certainly, but there is no statement nor argument in the whole three hundred of them put there simply for the sake of arguing, or to show what the preacher can do if he wishes to make a scholarly pulpit appearance. The preacher's sermons amplify and explain and analyse the parts of the Apostles' creed thoroughly and earnestly and sometimes brilliantly, but they never wander away from the main and direct highway to saunter nor linger in the broad fields and flowery vales on either side of it. They include the topics mentioned in the Sermon on the Mount, but no reference to the other things which have been for centuries favorites with theological debaters, from the question of how many angels can stand on the point of a needle to—well to many more modern controversies.

Analysed judicially, without reference to whether one agrees with all that is in them, but honestly, his sermons are found to be able to withstand real criticism.

Their logic is sound, and it leads without sophistry to its conclusions, granting the fundamental premises about the Bible and Jesus Christ. They appeal to the emotions less than the sermons of most evangelists, because of their logical content. In their substance there is very little emotional appeal, and what there is resides in the delivery rather than in the words and sentences—

and no more there than is necessarily inherent in all oratory used for whatever purpose and in whatever cause.

They attain their results by the cogency of their arguments, rather than by mere persuasion, in the sense that persuasion is the continued asking and suggestion—more or less nagging—that the small boy or girl uses upon the mother or father to obtain desires.

While, as in all oratory, it is the rhetoric in the sermons that compels the attention of the audiences, the more solid content in them in genuinely interesting. The rhetoric—as individual to Baxter McLendon as his mustache, his gait, or the timbre of his voice—moves audiences to laughter, to tears, holds them tense, sometimes spellbound, rouses them to enthusiasm or induces them to abhorrence, lifts them to applause or causes them to sit motionless as marble statues. But rhetoric alone never satisfies, never wins men to support causes, never caused a real change in a human life. He seems to recognise this in the construction of his sermons, for the rhetoric in them is no more than the clothing worn by a man of affairs or a woman of great charm.

If the wild and woolly escapades of the youthful Baxter McLendon lead one to expect the evangelist who is the same citizen of his state to cavort all over a platform, shoot out the lights with a gun in each hand, and hurdle chairs as his hunter jumps fences in a fox hunt, one is surprised at the dignified quality of his delivery. There is nothing blatantly sensational in it, nor anything that can be properly called merely sensational. The newspaper reporter assigned to cover one of his revivals can not devote himself entirely to description of what he does on the platform, and how he says what he says, as in the case of some other evangelists. He is forceful in the most emphatic way, with gestures that talk, silences that em-

Photo by Ackley

One of the tabernacles in which occur the very dramatic scenes of a revival held by Rev. Baxter F. McLendon with audiences coming for many miles to crowd it and overflow in a wide band of people around it. His audiences range from 3,000 people on a rainy night to over 10,000 on Sundays.

phasize, action to suit the words but not action merely for action's sake, plenty of movement, but never with an exhibition of athletics or gymnastics merely to put on a show. By the same token, his delivery is often highly dramatic, because restrained while forceful. His voice has more actual strength than that of perhaps any other pulpit orator in the public eye and reverberates through the auditorium; it also has excellent modulation and can caress in one sentence following another that sounds like a battery of big guns in action.

The diction of his sermons is distinctly his own style. In considering it, one is plunged at once between the contending lines of battle of those who are purists and consider all language a crime unless it measurably approaches the diction of Addison, and those who believe language is made to express thought any old way, and care in the choice and arrangement of words is applesauce. This evangelist is not a purist in the use of English; the purist is apt to feel that he defiles our more or less binational tongue. Especially when he hears something like this:

Ma shouted her hat off and her hair down. She looked like she was walking on a sea of glass mingled with fire. I'll never forget the shine on that old face and the sparkle that was in her eye.

Which is really not so bad, after all, when one considers this:

I heard a marsh (sic) hare icicle about six feet long stand in his pulpit and talk about the beauties of woman's dress in this twentieth century to just enough people to flag a handcar; and at the same time the weird strains of the can-can and hootchy-kootchy music could be heard while half dressed and painted face women were boll-weevil-woggling and Texas-Tommy-tangoing and bunny-hugging and buzzard-flopping and tickle-toeing and skunk-gliding and shimmying not fifty yards away.

But that paragraph is quoted only to hold up his diction at its very worst to horrify the purists. There is very little of that sort of language in his sermons. Sometimes his English is as pure and perfect as a verse out of the King James translation:

The stars had come out on dress parade. I have never seen any thing like it before or since. They dazzled and sparkled and scintilated and said, 'We are glad!'

A specimen of his contrasts of style sometimes is this:

I believe the enraptured hosts had walked out on the battlements of the sky; archangels had ceased to play their golden harps, cherubim had hushed their triumphant song, while seraphim had paused amid the shouts, and all heaven was looking down [gliding right on into this]: Hell had put on mourning, and the devil's blood pressure had gone to three hundred.

The description of the death of Judas, in one sermon, is much too long to quote here, but it is dramatic narrative that no English author or orator need be ashamed to sign—this evangelist can use the best of English when he desires and tries. Rather curiously, the best diction of all his pulpit work is in a sermon on the devil.

Perhaps his style becomes more lucid the more he is in bad humor. Not in a sermon, but in an interview on an attack made on his attitude toward evolution by an editor, which attack was anything but courteous and held the preacher up to scorn as a nit-wit, he thus disposed of that North Carolina editor.

I don't remember seeing him but one time, and I remember he impressed me with his bombastic, pompous, inflated, turkey-gobbler struttudiousness.

In a score of words he painted a portrait of a certain kind of man which makes us see his victim strutting in a small front yard and gives as faithful a picture of the man as twenty pages of type could do. Even the coining

of the last word is justified because it is so descriptive by suggestion as well as etymology.

In one particular he always excels in the use of his rich vocabulary. Whether he is using the language according to The Spectator, or language according to Lardner, every word is chosen for its precise meaning, and used to denote the finest shading of definition sometimes. Even those whose literary product is utilized to make up school readers do not attain greater, nor more consistant, precision in the use of words than this preacher has achieved by the most unconventional methods.

When he settles down to a very serious description of the actions of persons and the philosophy which causes the actions, he has long parts of sermons that in their style irresistibly suggest the earlier period of Mark Twain—who also was not a purist, but one of the great masters of English.

Once he interpolated this, apparently spontaneously, as it does not appear in the same sermon published earlier from a stenographic report:

The birds are singing, and the honeysuckle vines are growing all over the back yard of my soul.

Primitive, yes; but also poetry and an example of what may be done with a very few simple words properly combined. An expression that would never be attributed to Emerson; but one which measured by basic standards devoid of conventions is English pure and undefiled.

In the spring of 1927, this preacher began to study the pronunciation of words rather intensely. He rather suddenly realised that his pronunciation was attracting attention away from the thought in his sermons. One with incorrect habits of speech is never self conscious of the fact. He looked at the dictionary pronunciation of hundreds and thousands of words he had been accustom-

ed to use, and the more errors he found in his pronunciation, the keener he became in search of such gaucheries. Once, he told a congregation of four thousand people that a man had that day told him not to say caynt, but can't, but his boyhood associations made it very difficult to attain this particular vowel sound in the word; he promised to try to remember. It is a little curious that the provincialisms to be noted in his pulpit utterances are much more often those of pronunciation than of local colloquialisms—although he almost always says pa and ma and "sorry" in the Elizabethan sense after the fashion of the Carolinas.

If one must render a verdict in a sentence on the diction found in the sermons of this evangelist, it may be this: His style is very uneven, with a wide range in its qualities, sometimes sublime and sometimes ridiculous, but it is always clear as crystal and strong as a right hook to the jaw, in that it always transfers from the speaker to the auditor the idea intended without astigmatic distortion or loss of definition, sometimes with an accompanying sensation of beauty and sometimes with the feeling of being driven over a corduroy road. And it is about as complex as that last sentence.

It is what it is, because it is natural to him, more or less accidentally, and he never is unnatural in the pulpit and would not be so even to assume a veneer of pseudo-culture or scholarship.

The scholarship in his sermons permeates them and can easily be discerned by analysis; but it does not stick out of them like a four-carat diamond from the bosom of a race track tout. He never in his sermons spurts out a stream of figures and statistics, trippingly tells the velocity of light, causally quotes passages from the classical writers, nor parenthetically explains details of the

events in the government of Gustavus Adolphus. With his marvelous memory, he could cram up on such things and exude them quite as brilliantly as any other evangelist; his inherent honesty, and perhaps knowledge of the futility of such things, prevents him from making a show of his learning simply to make an impression on those who hear him. When it was mentioned to him that in all the range of his sermons there was a remarkable absence of references to science and the multitudinous things that comprise modern science, he replied:

"I don't know much science, and I never talk about anything unless I know about it."

"If there were more preachers like that, there'd be more men going to church," was the rejoinder of his questioner.

It is in private conversation on relevant topics that he often shoots out shafts of a scholarship which is so accurate as sometimes to confound one whose lesser memory lures one into disputing some fact. But his sermons are remarkably free from any egotistic exhibitions of erudition.

They are interesting from every angle, easy to listen to and easy to comprehend. In addition, they seem to stick in the minds of the congregations, for it is a common occurence for some person to refer to a part of one years after he heard it delivered.

## DRAMATIC CHRISTIANITY

By far the greatest drama is the history of christianity. The explanatory John in the wilderness and angels visiting Mary; the birth among the cattle; the scourging in the temple; the loaves and fishes, the wedding, the reviving of the dead, the trials before Herod, the Jew, and Pilate, the Roman, the crucifixion and resurrection and ascension; the tragedy of the apostles, Paul and the others; the growth of the church throughout civilization, the cross in the sky and the crusades; scene after scene in the successive acts in the following centuries; the tremendous force of more modern evangelism—they all combine into a coherent, gripping drama that dwarfs those of Shakespeare and Goethe to microscopic proportions.

There is a certain fitness in a preacher presenting the gospel of christianity in a dramatic way and according to the canons of dramatic expression. It happens that such a method was and is most natural for Baxter F. McLendon, and when he decided to be himself in the pulpit it became his method.

His first converts—the scores of them in that first stream coming down the aisles in Shreveport—started for the altar when he quit trying to talk like other preachers and silently stood beckoning after a mere dozen words that were an exclamation. There was enough dramatic power in that beckoning gesture and the posture of the young man filling the whole pulpit platform with his presence to lift scores from the pews to their feet, the altar rail and to Christ. He did not analyse this for himself, as is now being done, but he continued to be himself, and that means to be dramatic nearly all the time.

A study of his pulpit methods becomes a study of the dramatics in them.

He uses all the real art of the drama, not for entertainment, but for the saving of souls, as Jesus the Christ did on several occasions. This evangelist never had the least training in dramatic expression and does not know the alphabet of the schools of acting; he could no more write this chapter about that form of art than this writer could preach one of his sermons; it is not conscious art, and hence not really acting, he uses, for he is simply himself expressing himself in the easiest, most natural way with no knowledge of its technic; but it is a high quality of one of the greatest arts for all that, however indigenous in his complex personality.

There are all the elements of dramatic art in his sermons as he utters them in the pulpit: movement of the plot; contrast of action and in pictures; diction; vivid visualization; careful repression with apparent lack of all restraint; voice tone and modulation; action, posture and gesture fitting every sentence—if one takes Shakespeare as a standard dramatist and Hamlet's directions to the players as a standard of acting, one finds an interesting conformity to those standards as Baxter F. McLendon stands before an audience and delivers his own sermon in his own way. He often shows lack of refinement of finish and sometimes crudity in technic, but his presentation always has force and always grips his audiences—in the argot of the stage, it always gets across.

A story not vividly presented orally is like one dimly printed, difficult to read, and never making much of an impression. This evangelist has never been charged with that fault. Perhaps his greatest ability in presenting his theses is in his power of vividness of visualization, his capacity to make his audiences see, not himself or the pul-

pit, but the thing he portrays in its own setting as a picture in a frame. His remarkable combination of this visualization with tremendously hard straight arm blows of logic probably accounts for the major part of his superiority as an evangelist and the effect he produces on his congregations.

The word painting stories he heard at his mother's knee in his plantation boyhood home were not sufficient to give him that art, but the ability to paint pictures in words so marked in his mother and in some degree in her father, Marshall Swan, were transmitted to him and increased by his own education, reading and surroundings. He uses the verbal crayon and brush with dexterity and mixes his colors skillfully on the palette of his native tongue, by his own innate art. His characterizations are particolored landscapes of superb diction; his scenes in a street and his fox hunts in the swamps of his South Carolina county are cinemas seen on a screen that hides the man portraying them in rolling sentences instead of on reels; when he depicts anything, it is painted in words so that it is seen vividly by the mind's eye and not merely absorbed by the brain cells; and this is a constant phenomenon in his sermons, seen alike in a coon hunt and in Heaven, in a shooting scrape and in an incident of sin, in an old mother in a humble hovel and sinners in hell, in a foaming mad dog and the devil.

One result of this art of word painting is that things are made plain to everybody all the time. A complicated mechanism becomes intelligible when one sees a good picture of it; some apparent mysteries in the way God moves to perform his wonders are easy to understand when accurately pictured in the eye of the mind. Also, of course, such word pictures as this evangelist paints excite comment and praise from the worldly among others

and attract people to his meetings. Some come for the beauty and often return for the gospel message the artist emphasises in a sermon of which the word pictures are only the embellishments or the illustrations like the other pictures in line and color in the old family bible on the marble top table in the parlor at home when we were boys and girls. A story or a word picture is never lugged in for its own sake in any of his sermons; each has always its essential place in the movement of his argument and its vital use in the development of his theme.

The proper mixture of argument and word painting has the ulterior result of adding much force to all he preaches, recognised and summarised and visualised by one newspaper reporter in the five words: He hurls bombs of truth.

Those two things are only a pair of elements in the movement of plot in his drama, to adopt the language of the stage when speaking of it even in sermons. This evangelist does not repeat a text several times, emphasise its meaning, and then taper off a sermon in the form of a wedge with the text as the thicker end of it. He begins a sermon with a few sentences to create the atmosphere of its place in the campaign, the terrain around it, the trench it is going to defend or the enemy it is going to attack—as Shakespeare used the ghost and the modern dramatist uses the maid in the first act. And in the sermon, as in the other instances, the action starts very soon and keeps moving on more and more to the catastrophe and its resolution in the end.

It is remarkable how well this evangelist preserves the unities, especially of action, which few preachers do, by the way. His argument is never sidetracked to allow the passage of anything whatever extraneous to it. The action in his sermons continues without deviation to the

climax at its end in a direct line and without losing any time in wandering weavingly like the walk of a drunken man. There may be a little counter plot, but very little as a rule, and whatever there is, it is illuminating to the main theme.

This topic might be dismissed by saying that his arguments and sermons are always coherent and well defined; but that viewpoint leaves out of the picture the stark drama that is the very essence of their appeal and forcefulness. It may seem incongruous to analyse sermons in the terminology of the stage, but the necessary words belong in the nomenclature of dramatic art, when one is speaking of their method of presentation.

The contrasts so necessary to good dramatic construction are evident to almost all the hearers of this preacher. Sudden changes from the beautiful to the sordid in word pictures; quick shifts from logic to sarcasm, from argument to satire; parenthetical sentences that stick up like a purple patch of flowers on a green lawn; tremulos that throb running arpeggio into trumpeting that thrills; pathos and tragedy alternating back and forth—all these and more the audiences hear and feel and sense the dramatics of and sometimes talk about later. There are occasionally such quick shifts in objective, from one extreme to another, that in one breath, and perhaps in one long sentence, there will be the glory of salvation in heaven and the misery of damnation in hell contrasted effectively, because tersely, in the same picture.

Whoever has seen a really great play, Elizabethan or modern, has heard occasionally long periods roll off the tongue of some character like the music of the surf of the ocean. Rounded periods are more necessary to the drama than in any other form of literary art, and better examples are found in plays than in essays, stories or

speeches—witness Hamlet's soliloquy, or the advice to him of Polonius. Here is another point of similarity between the sermons under consideration and dramatic art. Better than much description is an example of this, taken from a sermon on Americanism, and the discerning critic will note that it is not oratory in any true sense of the word, but purely very strong dramatic composition:

One hundred and fifty years ago, it looked as though the divine right of kings would rule forever, so on the wings of imagination let us fly back to that day and time. Russia, the land of the bloody Cossack, was under the reign of Catherine II, one of the most good-for-nothing, vile, rotten, degenerate women who ever sat on a throne or wriggled her carcass across the pages of history. Prussia was like a roaring lion, feasting on the vast realm that the cruel sword of Frederick the Great had cut out of the heart of bleeding Europe. Austria was bowed under the cruel heel of Maria Theresa, daughter of Charles VI, and she was looked upon as the hell cat of the Hapsburgs. Spain was a blasted relic of days that had gone. Italy was helpless and on the dissecting table, while the nations divided the spoils. Japan was living in dark heathenism and worshiping Buddha and the sun. Egypt was practically the slave of the Turk. China was dozing amidst the opium of her dens, while the world robbed her as usual. Mexico was marching with her face to the ground and under the bayonets of Spain. France was unconsciously approaching a vortex of destruction, enough to melt a heart of stone. England was considered the most powerful nation on land or sea and had the world under her military thumb. At the time of which I have been talking, George Washington was forty-three years of age, Thomas Jefferson, the sage of Monticello, was eleven years his junior, and Alexander Hamilton was still in his teens—but he was going to vie with Jefferson to see who would rule this then growing republic. Benjamin Franklin had just extracted lightning out of the skies; Paul Revere sat on his horse watching for the signal from the old North Church, and you could hear the clattering of hoofs and see the fire leaping from the rocks as he

made his memorable midnight ride to Lexington to warn Hancock and Samuel Adams of the approach of English troops, and from behind stone fences and trees guns roared that were heard 'round the world.

This is not an attempt at oratory; it is not fine writing nor a word picture; it is sheer drama even to its adoption of a suggestion of Elizabethan English near its beginning which neither of the other literary forms might do. The orator would iron out its rhythm in places; the essayist would recast it entirely, and if a purist change many of the words. To deliver it as a speech, or read it from a page, is to invite restlessness or somnolence. It must be recited as drama, written by a dramatist for an actor to express. Here it must not be looked upon as a part of a manuscript sermon; one must imagine it expressed by the method used by Booth in the Hamlet soliloquy, by Barrett in the Mark Antony speech, or Mansfield in parts of the Music Master—and then one understands that it is not balderdash, nor an exuberation of rhetoric, but an excellent example of real dramatic composition—in a sermon by a preacher who is surcharged with dramatic feeling which flashes forth because he long ago decided to be simply himself in his pulpit work.

By the same token, he can express his own compositions dramatically. His voice, of wide range of tone and broad nicety of modulation under perfect control, can whisper the rustle of angel wings or boom the thunders of Sinai as he wills. His action, posture and gesture are so varied as to make it impossible to consider them in much detail here. He is sometimes, when the subject matter indicates, as quiet as a murmuring fountain on the lawn of a country house. But he is best remembered when he is energetically in action and suggests a fireman putting out a blaze in a beehive. Always he is acting

with as much purpose as a fireman who knows his business and whether to use a twin nozzle or a hand extinguisher. Some of his auditors have noted the method in his madness, by speaking of his methodical but nervous way. In it all he is simply himself in action.

Sometimes he goes to racing speed in telling a story. Sometimes he uses the emphasis of pauses between words in a sentence. At times he acts like a gladiator with delirium tremens, and at other times he moves his hearers to smiles like a baby's hand caressing a cheek, or to tears that flow gently. Most of the time he is in neither zone of activity, but in the golden mean between, with enough action to express dramatically the meaning of his words and thought without getting over the line of proper expression or of good taste.

Being a born actor untrained in any of the stage conventions, he has none of the limitations of the schools of dramatic art. He uses as much of the platform as he needs to be himself in his delivery of a sermon. Sometimes this is a few square feet near the pulpit; at other places in the same sermon his action expands all over the platform and may carry him down into the audience and back. In constant motion, for his personal school of dramatics knows no reveries, he never distracts attention from his thought and argument to his actions; whether he be standing on a chair or stalking the length of the platform, or what not, it emphasises and fixes attention on the sentence he is pronouncing at the moment and not on his posture or gestures. And all critics are agreed that is exactly what action and gestures are for on any stage or platform.

His audiences have seen the charge of the Light Brigade illustrate the dictum that the soldier must obey the

LIBRARY
GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

order of the commander, as the christian must obey the commands of God, without sensing the voice or actions of the man before their eyes. They follow Hobson into Santiago harbor and see him sinking the Merrimac in a hell of shell fire without noticing Baxter McLendon who is painting the picture for them in words—and the next minute they are apt to see for themselves that God saved Hobson to fight the damnable, polyadjectival whisky business. They have seen the preacher, after an apparent impasse greeting his invitations, call for somebody to throw him a hat, "and I'll preach you a whole sermon on repentance in one minute." They see the soft, black big hat crumpled into a wad and thrust under his coat over his heart. What he says is:

Now, you've got one, big, black sin in your heart that you must pull out root and branch, and when you tear that out, all the rest will fall away as nothing. To pull it out will tear every nerve and sinew in your body. But pull, tug and twist, and swing onto the damnable thing, until it comes out root and branch and throw it at the feet of Jesus.

These few words come out like the groans of a Laocoon but they are comparatively trivial. With every sign of excrutiating pain in twisted face and writhing body, he tugs at the hat over his heart; as the hat clings in its place, pain mounts to agony in feature and posture, unbearable agony very soon. Just before even a strong man must faint dead away from the anguish of tearing out that black flesh, it is by one tremendous heave snatched from its imbedded place and thrown upon the floor. Stark, sheer tragedy, all action, and one blase newspaper reporter said once that nothing in the passion play at Oberammergau except the crucifixion itself could surpass that scene in dramatic power.

Incidentally, it broke the dam between the preacher and the sinners, and there was a debacle of penitents rushing down to the altar—for with a couple of words and a gesture or two he called upon them, and they gave no heed to the preacher, but all heed to the plucking of a favorite sin each from his own heart. It was dramatic force that thus turned the tide at that series of meetings, tragedy of appeal and strength, and not mere sensationalism by any means.

All this is saved from being sensational in the newspaper sense of the word by a dignity that pervades it constantly—the real dignity of the man or woman very sure of his or her position. There can be nothing blatantly intruding in that real dignity, any more than there can be any pose of superiority.

The form, verbiage, and delivery of his sermons would make a sensation in some old Massachusetts meeting house where the congregations had been listening to the minister read from manuscript sermons as prosy and as definitely constructed as an article in an encyclopedia. But to the modern person of culture less concerned with conventions than with true art, even if new art, they have little of the quality and effect of cubist drawing, freak architecture, or ultramodern stage setting. In the hearer they produce none of the sensation caused by seeing a man go over Niagara Falls in a barrel, looking at a girl jump from the wing of an airplane, or watching a motion picture actor whip an army. Sensational is a word of comparison, and the genuine dignity of this preacher in the pulpit rejects it, unless one's standards of comparisons are on the level of the Spectator, or one of Macauley's essays. Proof of this is in the fact that, unlike some other evangelists, this one has never had his name blazoned on the first page of the yellow, sensational news-

papers—and unlike some others he never makes sensational comments on current events to get himself on those first pages.

Evangelist McLendon dramatises himself and his sermons, and there is a wide gulf between the dramatic and the merely sensational. Whoever expresses drama, be it tragedy, melodrama, or comedy, must have real dignity all the time, or he will become a laughing stock. Dignity in the part has kept many a characterization on the right side of the line between good art and crudity. The dignity natural to this evangelist, pervading his innate dramatic ability, keeps him always on the right side of the line between sensationalism and effective preaching. He is dramatic in his words and actions as the Prince of Denmark was, but he is sensational only in the sense that the retribution sent upon the melancholy Dane's mother and stepfather may be called sensational.

He follows the direction of Hamlet to fit the action to the word very well indeed, and he does it entirely naturally, because it is natural for him. He has not the highest art that conceals art, for he exhibits his natural posture, gestures and action without any concealment. He does have naturally that high degree of art in action which transforms the player into the character portrayed. His audience loses sight of the preacher from South Carolina who to it has become the veritable lawyer in his office, pharisee in the street, Abraham sacrificing his son, a missionary in the jungle, a boy on a plantation, Ben Franklin making a speech, a parent in a home, a decrepit old man, a snob—intellectual, professional or society in species—an old farmer in a big city, a convict in a prison, Enoch walking with God, a convert of the Salvation Army, a boy stealing plums, a man at a camp meeting, and the other people he impersonates in a man-

ner that brings them upon the stage for a trice and eliminates his own personality.

But whatever ideas or action has been in a sermon, it generally ends with a smiling preacher surveying his audience benevolently and beckoning them, sometimes in one way and sometimes in another, to arise and come.

Those who hear this evangelist preach night after night for some weeks are apt to think and say that he tosses away all restraint and lets himself run wild. Nothing could be more erroneous. Apparently, he sometimes discards all inhibitions and allows his mouth, his brain, his arms and legs, and his whole body, to unite in one great convulsion of exploding energy—but all that time there is a fixed restraint on his every word, gesture and action. Otherwise there would be no art, no force and no effect on the audience. He is a master of that particular technic longed for by all orators and actors, perfect restraint with every appearance of complete abandon. Right here lies one secret of his power. He is like a modern water-power utilizing every ounce of energy in the natural conditions, but harnessing and controlling that energy to blaze forth here in a big search light and work there to drive a sewing machine to make a gossamer gown—and always according to plan and always controlled to a milliampere.

One result of this restrained delivery which has the appearance of being entirely an abandon of action and gesture is to increase the effect of his words by impressing one with their sincerity and fearlessness. The man is entirely sincere and perfectly fearless, and people who have no opportunity to prove this by long acquaintance feel it whenever they see him in action in the pulpit. Another effect of his energy in presenting his sermons is to give him the appearance of one of his own fox hounds tug-

ging at the leash when the hunt is starting—it proves that he, in the very beginning of one of his campaigns in a town, is in earnest and working from the first song of the first service of the series.

The real effect of all this dramatic sermonising upon his audiences is told in the statistics of the number of his converts in another chapter. The more superficial effects are more tangible than rows of figures. Women weep and men casually wipe eyes; now there is a chorus of amens, and then a silence that is as tangible as a solid rock; one night the audience half rises in the seats and gives a great cheer, and later the same night laughs in a loud surge of reverberating cachinnation; it is lively then severe by turns—it is moved precisely as any audience is moved by a great drama presented by a great artist in expression of the dramatic. That is in its emotions—its intellect is convinced by the logic of the preacher and accepts the cogency of his argument or not, as the case may be in each auditor, generally accepting the conclusion of the whole matter in the sermon. But many came and listened to the sermon because of what it was and the manner in which it was presented—and these latter things bring thousands more under the influence of its appeal for christianity.

What are the component parts of the teachings which this evangelist is presenting so forceably, dramatically and successfully in the pulpit? How does he apply the gospel of Christ to the complex civilization today? How does he understand the teachings of the Master as preserved in the Bible? What is his view of the broad field of the christian religion? What does he actually promulgate, and what emphasize, within the limits of a series of meetings in which obviously he can not cover the whole ground minutely, nor preach all of the three hundred sermons he has at the end of his tongue, one of which he chooses to deliver at each service?

It is easier to answer these questions, because of the clearness and vigor with which he says all that he does say in the pulpit. There is no excuse for anybody getting a wrong impression about what he believes and teaches. He would never raise any apprehension that his teachings might be too metaphysical for the man in the street or the woman in the home to comprehend.

One who has critically studied his sermons to discover by analysis just what are the elements in them, as the chemist in the laboratory analyses a complex mixture into its basic and acidulous radicals, is deterred from writing a statement or syllabus of their content—because the preacher himself has stated in each case his thesis better and more tersely and plainer than anybody else may hope to do. The best method of learning exactly what he believes and preaches on a large variety of topics is to read what he says in his own words—nobody else can make it any clearer by paraphrase or condensation.

One noticeable thing is, that he never fails to apply the teachings and commands of Jesus the Christ to the affairs of modern life and the problems of the twentieth century since Christ walked on earth and brought the new testament to mankind.

This chapter gives the viewpoints and opinions of Baxter F. McLendon, the evangelist preacher, on most of those subjects which churchmen believe to be essential to orthodoxy and those others which many men and women are studying today as the brotherhood of man is being more understood as a natural result and important detail in the fatherhood of God.

His theology is fully treated in another chapter as a simple but strict adherence to the Apostles' creed. Its connotation in his own mind is expressed in the following paragraph from one of his sermons:

My heart's cry today is: Back to the Bible; back to the supernatural. Away with the sickly, sentimental trash that we see about us these days. Back from this high toned, kid gloved, devil concocted starch of today. Back from this damning, soul withering worldly embellishment and human reasonings that have been instituted in place of the Holy Ghost, and let's have that oldtime, ear unstopping, limb straightening, tongue emptying power. Let's have the supernatural that glorifies God and glorifies the Son—a power that will empty sepulchers and break chains, take off bands and let the captives go free.

In almost every sermon there is a statement or assumption on that basic axiom that God, Christ and christianity are beyond the reach of the human mind and human power in their ultimate zones and essence. A corollary of this idea is seen in what he says about prayer:

Sin cuts the wire between us and the source of all grace and power and blessing. If you want power in prayer, eliminate, eradicate, exterminate, and no longer

elongate, sin in your life and heart. So long as we hold on to sin or have any controversy with God, we cannot expect Him to hear our prayers. . . . .

More of this conception of God as being superior to the observations of mankind on earth appears in this one sentence about the Creator in a sermon:

Thought without a thinker, design without a designer, effect without a cause, creation without a creator, is a conception that dispenses with reason.

In the last clause of that sentence, he argues that his supernatural conception of God is no more unreasonable than theism, but in another sentence he goes a step further when he says:

A holy life is the best answer that can be made to the modernists, the liberalists of the twentieth century, camouflaged infidels of today.

We hear more about modernists and fundamentalism and gather that he has small patience for the former, when we hear him say in a sermon on defending the faith of our fathers and the early church:

Here is the true status of today: a radical tendency and a great falling away from the true faith. We are in a day of liberalism—liberalism of the sabbath—liberalism of love—liberalism of divorce—liberalism of religion—liberalism of doctrine—liberalism of morals and conduct. There isn't a convention, a conference, a presbytery, or a religious assembly, that you do not find it poisoned and shot through with infidelity clothed in modernism and liberalism.

He has full faith in the survival of the Bible as the Word of God, nevertheless, for he says it is an enduring revelation despite the sneers of its modern critics, and:

Every time the devil raises up a Percy Stickney Grant, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Shailer Matthews, or John Rice, God raises up a Reuben A. Torrey, J. Frank Norris, John Roach Stratton, William Jennings Bryan, or H. C. Morrison.

We may not agree on doctrines, but we do believe the Bible is the inerrant Word of God.

As to changes coming with changing times and manners, he accepts the idea that the church should also change its methods, when he says:

The business world, the political world, the financial world, are up early and late, burning it up like the twentieth century limited, but the christian world has the same old stage coaches that were in use one hundred years ago, the same old smooth bore cannons that were in service during the Revolutionary war, and the old flint and steel guns that our great-great-grandpas used, and it would take five minutes for one to go off after pulling the trigger. For God's sake, let's start something in a religious way; get out of the old rut which is a grave with both ends knocked out; get you some eight cylinder cadillacs and Twentieth century limiteds that will take three men to see!

The loose talking and loose thinking of modernity he rebukes often, as in severe strictures on the failure to draw the well marked line between personal liberty and license. About another phase of that same sort of illogical argument, he says:

There are no necessary evils. If a thing is evil, it isn't necessary; and if it is necessary, it isn't evil.

One of the two or three references to scientific things to be found in his three hundred sermons is this:

I believe in blood—good blood and bad blood, proud blood and humble blood, religious blood and infidel blood, honest blood and dishonest blood, virtuous blood and licentious blood, heroic blood and cowardly blood. I believe that blood will tell in its persistence of traits in heredity.

Apropos, there are hardly any scientific references in his sermons, even as illustrative figures of speech, and he must be given credit for not spouting pseudo-science from

half baked and superficial knowledge of the science of the scholars.

He treats true science, as distinguished from scientific hypotheses, thus:

What did public opinion do in the days of Dr. Jenner? Dr. Jenner was the man who discovered the principle of vaccine virus, and by virtue of vaccination they have reduced the number of smallpox fatalities. . . . . Which was right, Jenner or public opinion? They scoffed at Jenner and said he was crazy, but vaccination did the work.

He uses Galileo as another example of a scientist doomed because he was a scientist and ran counter to public opinion; but a very few such oblique references to anything scientific in nature or history are all that his audiences hear along that line of thought. That this is due to his determination—natural for him and consistently acted upon by him—not to mention anything about which he is not well informed, and is not due to any fear of being thought freakish, is shown by the following paragraph in a sermon:

The trouble that confronts the church of the twentieth century is that we are all too sober. We don't want people to say that we are cranks, fanatics, or extreme enthusiasts. That is what we are trying to avoid; we want them to go away and say that it is just beautiful, delightful, entertaining, refreshing, satisfying, and pleasant.

As to the prevailing spirit in the churches today, the same idea is found in the two sentences:

A beaver wants his dam; so there is a beaver religion. In proportion as the church loses spiritual power, it increases in formalism and ritualism.

And about working in the church part of the time and with part of the interest left in amusements and business, he says:

Working for your church doesn't any more make you a christian than working in a livery stable makes you a horse. There are a lot of you church members walking about God's heritage with unclean hands handling holy things, and your heart is as black and filthy as the hinges on the gates of hell.

A great many of our church members seem to have lost their passion for vital religion and are lolling in their well fed contentment, satisfied with magnificent buildings, stained glass windows, vestments, rich, influential congregations—and spiritual death awaits the church unless she hurls herself from her couch of ease.

The troubles and faults of the modern churches may be due to flowery beds of ease, he opines, when he says in the middle of a sermon:

It was when the church was persecuted, when she was despised, that she had her greatest power. When the Salvation Army had six hundred captains and officers in jails of nineteen countries, they had four times as much power with God and souls as they have tonight. . . . . I pray God he will raise up some folks nowadays who will arouse the animosity of the devil and make hell put on mourning until there is a persecution worth talking about.

And so there is no surprise when in a sermon to his converts, sometimes preached as the final message of a series of meetings, he tells them that they must work and struggle to maintain the christian life:

Now they tell us that it is irreverent and egotistical to count converts. Well, they counted them two thousand years ago, and Jesus says there is joy in heaven over one—and if He counts one, He will count three thousand.

The idea that God attends to details, such as the conversion of one certain sinner on occasion, is thus put forth by the man who as a boy received that individual call to preach which changed his whole life:

Don't think that God is so busy managing worlds, throwing out planets, fixing stars and controlling the universe, that He has no time to think of you.

It is that final sermon of some revivals he holds, its title referring to running a race, that is the vade mecum for recent converts, a manual of exercises and directions to increase strength in christian activities. Early in it occurs this:

I want to say to you young converts here today that if you will take this old Book, you can meet the toils and stand the dangers and overcome the temptations; you can live right and die victoriously and outshine the sun through eternity.

That whole sermon is so compressed, so full of terse common sense and pragmatic philosophy, so rapid in movement over so much territory, that it is invidious to cull any particular paragraphs from it; and it tells how the christian lives in these later days, or to be precise, how this evangelist believes he must live to be a hundred percent christian.

It is to be expected that Baxter F. McLendon should be the antagonist of snobbery, caste and aristocracy, and he is always in his sermons praising the common people. He expresses his contempt for society climbers more than once, as in a denunciation of gambling in a sermon on common sins and dangerous practices:

The gambler who wins is a thief, and the man who gambles and loses is a fool. I am not against the stud poker games and the crap shooter as much as I am against the social climbers and the seed tick, effervescent, would-be-aristocracy, kindergarten gambling dens in their parlors.

He argues for the christian Sabbath on all three grounds of divine command, the physiological need for it, and its necessity to government, condensing his argument into this one paragraph:

We hear in some quarters that the Sunday law has been repealed. Well, God hasn't repealed it. You give up your Sabbath and see what happens. First the home,

and then the church, and then the state will go. God has ordained certain laws for the good of man. He has established the seasons and fixed one day as a day of rest. We need one day in seven just as much as the clock needs to be wound when it is run down. You had better keep God's law. The corruption of morals follows the destruction of the Sabbath. The christians make the best citizens.

He sees nothing but sex appeal in the dance, and a sex appeal that is dangerous in several ways. About dancing he says in a sermon:

I tell you the dance does not appeal to the intellectual or moral natures; it appeals to the carnal nature always. And it brings vice and virtue into close contact—and virtue loses. No wonder that Elizabeth Stuart Ward says: Any fashion or amusement that gives a man a right to clasp a pure woman in his arms and hold her there the length of an intoxicating piece of music is below moral defense and absolutely proves that the dance is destructive to morals. I have never figured out how a few strains of music can make indecency decent and immodesty modest. Just as alcohol is the spirit of whisky, so sex is the spirit of the dance.

So dramatic a preacher could hardly object to the drama, and nobody realises its values better than he does. But the drama is an art and a part of literature must be differentiated from shows put on the stage in its name without any real connection with it, he feels, and in a sermon says:

I have nothing against the theater as an institution, but I am against the way it is run. . . . . A great many of the shows are nothing less than the work of moral scavengers and filth producers, the product of moral leprosy. The stage is filled with half dressed women; it is the vulgar incarnation of impurity spun about a display of hosiery.

And as to the latest and most generally diffused exhibition in theaters:

The movies have done more than any other single force

to mar and destroy the holier things of life; especially have they harmed the home life and children of today.

One who has read this chapter of extracts from sermons thus far may be pardoned some little surprise that their composer is very discriminating in his definition of literature and stands four square with the real literati and best critics of his time, when he says in one of his sermons that one of the things we need in this country is a revival of literature.

It is the effect on morals and christian neophytes that he makes his particular theme in treating of the printed matter published for general circulation, and he urges that the bad be boycotted.

Truth in ideals and living to one's own standards is a high virtue in the mind of this preacher, who talks about essential truth thus:

There is no man I so love and delight to honor as the man who is true. There is no woman I so delight to honor as the woman who is true. There is no one I so abhor and hate and detest and loathe as the man or woman whose words are untrue and whose promises are as vapor.

I may differ from a man in politics, religion or in business, and if he is living up to his highest ideals, even if I think those ideals wrong, I respect him and will do my best to clear up his errors and lead him to the sunlit hills of God's pardon.

Recurring to that honesty of purpose elsewhere in a sermon, he expresses his optimism about mankind by saying:

Thank God, there are some men that can't be browbeaten, intimidated, bribed or bought. There are too many men nowadays that will sell out, too many folks that the devil can buy—you and your influence. But I believe that most men are honest, virtuous, sober and loyal to God, and I am thankful for it. To discover a fault and to determine to remove it is to add a new line

of beauty to your character, a new attractiveness to your manhood and womanhood.

There is remarkable little attention given by this evangelist in the pulpit to the numerous slanders to which every popular evangelist is subject much of the time. Some evangelists use one lie told about them one time over and over to lambast opposition, as housewives beat the same old rug on a clothesline every day. This one answers those that are actually extant in the present place of campaign that are worth while answering, but he is wise enough to know that chasing a lie principally only makes one out of breath for nothing much.

He devotes himself chiefly to those wrongs that are injuring others, as witness this entire chapter; and while his sermons are all on a main theme which is a vital part of salvation, with one occasionally to strengthen the loins of the converts and the church members, there are in them many references to the more common sins—those that their very frequency have become minor peccadilloes in the minds of many very good people.

One of these is profanity, which he hits hard in these words, beginning with those who admit they swear occasionally:

> They think it a light matter, but God does not regard it so. If there is any sin that shows that the very foundation of a man's character is honeycombed and rotten, it is the sin of profanity. You cannot trust a profane swearer anywhere. A profane swearer is ripe for any crime.

He covers many phases of sociology in his sermons. While he had a church in the outskirts of Columbia, the state capital, in the very beginning of his career, he often preached at the South Carolina penitentiary on invitation of the chaplain. Conditions there, that later became a state near scandal and a major issue in politics, were so inhumane and unsanitary that Baxter McLendon fer-

vently prayed for a pardoning governor. The state got one a little later who nearly emptied the penitentiary with one stroke of his pen, and the man who had been preaching to the tuberculosed convicts and praying for pardons to release them saw his prayer answered. That is only one of the many incidents in his life showing his deep interest in everything that affects his fellow men as part of his sense of the brotherhood of man.

He makes several references to capital and labor in different sermons. He long retained his membership in the coal miners union which he joined during his flight after the shooting incident in Bennettsville. He has done considerable studying of capital in actual operation, and his home state began after the world war a long and large advance in manufacturing amid the old cotton plantations which depended upon muscle power for production more than any other form of agriculture. On such topics he says in some sermons:

Every man who rents a building for more than legitimate interest on the money invested is a thief; and every man who rents and does not pay his rent is a thief.

The man who employs laborers and takes advantage of the poor man's necessities and ignorance and does not give him in pay a full equivalent for his labor is a thief; and every laboring man who does not give to his employer in good honest work a fair equivalent for the wages received is a thief. . . . .

It is easily understood that he obtained his perspective of Labor from his experience in the coal mines, worked largely by aliens of radical tendencies, rather than from such leaders as Samuel Gompers and his successor. That he is not antagonistic to organized labor while seeing so clearly the need of capital, is shown in the next paragraph in that same sermon:

I want you to believe that I believe in organized labor.

I still have my old union card when I used to belong to the coal miners union. I was the first man in South Carolina to run a union barber shop.

In America we want no slavery of employees and no servility of employers; either is contrary to the industrial relationship contemplated by American institutions. Give all power to capital, and it will oppress labor; give all power to labor and it will oppress capital; both therefore ought to have the power that each may defend itself against the other.

Unions have the right to organize and fix a scale of wages, and my sympathy is with them as long as they do not molest the rights of individuals or the rights of property; but they have no right to destroy property, or to do bodily harm to prevent individuals working where they please, when they please and for what they please. . . . .

He constantly refers to the dangers arising from the admission of the spawn of foreign countries into this one to propagate the ideas of the Third Internationale and other revolutionary Russian doctrines, and that these propagandists find within the ranks of labor the field for their endeavors most dangerous to America. As to work itself, one short sentence from one sermon expresses his attitude entirely adequately. It is:

The only undignified job I know of is loafing.

In many of his sermons are references, themic or parenthetical, to the home and the family. In one he says that the home is the one spot on earth where is concentrated the largest percentage of worldly interests. In another sentence he says home is the most sacred spot in the world. Again he says the home is the greatest problem with which we have to deal today. After a vivid and rather extended description of the difference between the home and a house, he launches into an eloquent passage on the vital relation between the home and government,

the function of the home in shaping the careers of peoples and nations. Part of this is:

When the home is full of weakness, the government is full of danger. The home consists not in its fond memories and hallowed associations—the home is the great conservator of good, the seeding place of virtue and the origin of civilization. The laws of a nation are but rescripts of domestic codes.

There can be no abiding political reforms that are not based on christianity. The nation will never rise higher than the home life, nor sink lower than the home life. I want to say that no nation, no people will rise higher than the moral life of its people.

Of course the home's characteristics are determined by the parents, and he gives much of a sermon on the home to consideration of parents. As to fathers and mothers:

Fathers in their greed for money and with the multiplicity of cares that have been heaped upon them have grown too busy; mothers have delegated their God given work to others. We have lost in this country instead of gained.

His preaching about children is thoroughly practical in detail and evidently based largely upon the success he and his wife have had with their own children. Its psychology is purely pragmatic, but entirely sound so far as it goes. He believes in being positive, rather than negative with children, and preaches this doctrine of rearing children in the way they should go:

And you parents, don't always be saying to your children, Don't, Don't! It has been said that a child should be seen and not heard; that's not true; that's parental selfishness.

Don't break a promise to your children. Break a promise to the bank, to your neighbors, to each other, rather than to your children.

Don't tell your children what you don't mean. Don't talk about your neighbors; if you have to let your gas

carbureters run, send your children out. Don't hurt their self respect. . . . .

Make your home attractive. . . . . Every carpet, rug, pillow, picture and table in my home is for my children, and if they want to use the mattress for a wrestling mat, it's all right, and if they want to fight a pillow battle, they go to it. I am not going to be afraid for them to shout and laugh. Some parents seem to have the idea if a child laughs, it will knock the cobwebs out of the room.

But to return to conventional ways of keeping children from spoiling, he directs some remarks in the direction of the children themselves that are interesting, if as old as the adage about the rod and the child:

The average boy and girl needs a motto on the wall with a leather strap behind it and these words: I need thee every hour. . . . .

The relations of the husband and the wife of course are a part of any treatise on the home, be it in a book, an address, or a sermon. This preacher has some references to the partnership that is the cornerstone of the home, like these:

I want to say to you husbands here tonight that there is a great responsibility lying at your door in the way you should treat your wife. If you want to be the right kind of husband, honor your wife, love your wife, show your love, suffer for your wife if need be, study to keep her young, consult with her, help to bear her burdens, be thoughtful of her always, don't command, but suggest.

Seek to refine your own nature. Don't be a roughneck; be a gentleman as well as a husband. Remember the past experiences of your wife. Level up to her character. Don't be out every night at the lodge or club; stay at home as much as possible. Take your wife with you often.

There are other ways of killing people besides driving a knife into the heart or firing a bullet into the brain. Many a husband is killing his wife by neglect, cruelty and unfaithfulness.

And to you wives I would say that just as there is a responsibility lying at the door of your husbands, so there is a responsibility lying at your door.

You should reverence your husband, love him, and not conceal your love for him. . . . . Forsake all for him; let him be the biggest man in your sight in the world; confide in him, and don't keep any secrets from him; keep his love at any cost; cultivate the modesty and delicacy of youth; cultivate personal attractiveness, and don't go around with your face shining like a door knob when powder is so cheap. You don't have to dress slovenly; you can be neat and attractive.

If you read nothing and make no effort to be intelligent, you will soon sink into a block of dull stupidity.

As to that profession upon whose shoulders so many parents seek to unload the entire training of children, he says parenthetically in his sermon on the home:

I want to say there is not a harder worked crowd of people on the top side of the earth than the public school teachers. They get less pay for what they do, and more cussing for what they don't do, than any set of people on earth. I won't even exclude the preachers. You let me go into a town and show me the kind of school buildings they have in that town, and I will tell you what kind of a town it is, and what kind of people live there.

The number of topics included in this chapter of quotations is large, but only a fraction of what a complete dictionary of quotations from the sermons of Baxter F. McLendon would contain.

Enough have been given to show the broad range of his sermonising and the large inclusiveness of his preaching, with some indication of how everything is connected and woven into the fabric of what is always his main theme, christianity.

His sermons make better reading than those of some other evangelists, although they may not sound better than the best of the profession as heard from the pulpit.

The reason is, that reading is a test of solid content, while hearing attends chiefly to form. One who has read this chapter through must have noted how solidly this preacher stands on common sense—fundamental truth—in his discussions of the many things about which he talks. Those best informed on any subject treated in these last foregoing pages will practically always agree with this evangelist in sociology, economics, literature, amusements, the church, human characteristics, or what not.

Separated from the dramatics or rhetoric of their delivery, the sermons of Baxter F. McLendon really lose nothing—or at least little—by being turned into cold, merciless print, insofar as their actual content is concerned, and they stand the acid test of the types.

But of course there is the same difference between reading and hearing them, as there is between reading one of Shakespeare's plays and witnessing Edwin Booth play Hamlet.

## ONE NIGHT

One night is not like any other night by any manner of means while this evangelist is holding a revival, but yet there is a certain number of circumstances that are constant, every night and everywhere.

Cards in store windows and posters scattered profusely where they can be seen have told the populace that between certain dates he will hold a meeting in a certain place. Talk turns into discussion, and curiosity evolves into interest as the meetings begin. Baxter F. McLendon is so well known and so highly appreciated that the simplest of announcements is sufficient to attract a large audience for even the first meeting of the series. Unlike some very good preachers whose audiences increase in size as they make a reputation in the first weeks of their meeting, Baxter F. McLendon has attained a standing which often brings as large an audience for the first service as later assembles to hear him.

It is Sunday night—the very first night of a meeting, or the fourth Sunday night of the series are much alike—or almost any week day night at a McLendon revival. It is a sight worth seeing, in addition to its religious appeal.

Long before time for the sermon to begin, there is a perceptible increase in traffic on all the roads leading into town, and in the streets the automobiles are converging at the tabernacle. Where a big muslin banner stretches across the street with "Cyclone Mack" in letters a foot high and the opening and closing dates of the revival flanking it, there is more or less of a traffic jam for an hour or so. In the larger cities or the smaller towns, the scene is about the same. Uniformed policemen in the city

or the town marshal in the small town or village, are very active keeping the cars moving slowly and making them unload with the greatest possible expedition. They go on to seek a parking place and sometimes go far in that quest.

Perhaps the meeting is in a small town with the tabernacle on its edge where one of the main roads enters it to become Main street. The crowding and traffic congestion are as great there as in Atlanta or Fort Worth. For a mile or so along the highway automobiles are parked on both sides of the road. Every unfenced field in the nearby country and every vacant lot in that part of the town is filled with cars parked in tiers as on the infield of a Derby day.

The license plates bear the names of cities fifty or seventy miles away, and nearly always the colors and designs of two states are to be seen in the parking places—the tabernacle must be near the very center of a state if it does not attract people from an adjoining commonwealth. If the meeting is within a hundred miles of another town where the same evangelist held a revival once, there is sure to be a large delegation from the previous sphere of action near the opening date and several times during the weeks the meeting continues. When several such formerly conquered cities send delegations the same night, the late comers to the tabernacle are likely to crowd the doorways, as every foot of space is filled in the big building.

Generally, the congregations, whether of five or six-thousand, or only two or three thousand, are a cross section of the part of the nation thereabouts. The banker and cotton baron are crowded in beside the tenant farmer; the physicians are mingled with bench and bar, and all professions are scattered all over the house; the well

brushed and pressed product of a good tailor rubs against a wrinkled suit bought off the shelf year before last; a crepe gown made by a modiste is between a gingham and a calico dress made at home.

Unlike most church congregations and more like the census tables, the number of men in one of these tabernacle audiences is at least equal to the number of women attending the services. This evangelist is a man's preacher and his success is not dependent upon his charm for womankind nor on account of his being a sweet soul. Neither is he a preacher who only comforts the fathers and mothers in Israel by telling them the things about salvation and religion and temptation they knew to the full before he was born; he attracts youth verging into manhood, just becoming acquainted with its responsibilities, and the average age of his audiences is generally between thirty and forty years—of course there is always present a number of elderly men and women and some children—but he does not make any special appeal to the children as such as a rule.

There is a certain air of expectancy constantly to be sensed in the big plane of faces seen from the platform—the preacher is a master at maintaining suspended interest; and this is not the waiting for some new stunt from the pulpit, as is the case with the audiences of some evangelists, but the knowledge that at any moment some really dramatic scene will be staged there, some powerfully eloquent passage occur in the sermon, or some story told that grips men and women as the best of bedtime stories enthrall children. Principally, it is this mastery of that most difficult thing, suspended interest, that holds great audiences quiet, often motionless, for as long as this preacher chooses to preach. Occasionally the sermon is only a half hour long; often it goes on for an hour and a

half; generally it stops with one revolution of the minute hand of a watch—but whatever its length, there is no thought of looking at watches or timing it, for it always ends while the auditors are interested and forgetful of the passage of time.

They have been in the benches long before the sermon started. Half an hour before the time set for that, the choir of forty or four hundred have been singing the type of songs to be found only in the various publications called gospel hymns. The chorister waves his arms and legs, energises his fatuous smile and entreats and commands by turns, and the choir, rather hastily formed out of the local inhabitants who are willing to sing for the sake of always having the best seats in the huge building, carols about the mountain, the river, marching and leaning, sinners and salvation.

The preacher has arrived much earlier than is really necessary during this opening song service. He sits on the single chair on the pulpit platform and seems to listen to the music for awhile. Soon he is up and walking around the part of the platform which is his own oratorical stage like a caged lion circling behind the bars. Sometimes, he slowly saunters down the steps and to a man in the front row who is doing more than his share to make the meeting a success; sometimes he continues his slow excursion up an aisle returning salutation bows with a slight but cordial nod of the leonine head and a piercing but pleasant glance of the shining black eyes. As slowly and as casually, he saunters back to his own special place in time to be standing motionless behind the pulpit containing his sermon manuscript in black loose-leaf binding as the chorus of the last song resounds from the choir section.

As the echo from the rafters of the last major chord

stops, he is silent for a moment, and then he is launched into a prelude talk. He does not know it, but it is the method of the onetime eminent Joseph Cook in his onetime famous Boston Monday Lectures in Faneuil Hall about the time this other preacher was born in an overseer's house on a South Carolina plantation—the method being that the topic of the prelude is very distinct from that of the following discourse, but yet having certain faint connotations with it. The manner and tone is entirely conversational with that quality that makes them seem to take the audience into his confidence.

Perhaps the monologue chat with his thousands of hearers is about his attitude toward the latest policy of the clergy to boycott all evangelists: "The preachers who oppose evangelists compel us to be free lances—it's not preachers like these God fearing ones here, but the society bellwethers. I've stopped asking them where I can go. I'm not fighting anything except sin." He adds that "the reason for the fight being made on evangelists is the number of modernists in the pulpits."

And while he is explaining this, one may look down into the audience and see several preachers, some of whom have come many miles, who were originally converted in one of this evangelist's meetings years before.

That prelude chat may be about his family and Rena, or a comparison of the two Carolinas, in one of which he was born, and the other of which he espoused early in his ministerial work. Or it may be a welcome to the negroes segregated in a perfectly good annex to the main auditorium—in which he says—and it is one of the very rare times that any hint of irony creeps into his tones:

"There's hardly a man in this Southern country who wouldn't want you colored people to come—the farther

north you go, the stricter you see the race line drawn in religion."

In the Carolinas there is quite apt to be an invitation to the negroes to sing during the opening song service. It is a musical treat always to hear the negroes of the coastal plain sing their spirituals in the country of the origin of that music. Sometimes a bunch of darkies will show off to the white folks and win much praise. Sometimes the whole negro section of the tabernacle will become so rapt at their own soul expressing singing, that they do not stop, but sing on with constantly increasing unction. Once they shook off all restraint and the audience thought they had ursurped the meeting and crowded out the evangelist and his sermon: but with artful knowledge of the negro Baxter McLendon finally stopped their music and was enabled to preach.

Or he may chattily tell his auditors: "The only thing that'll save this country is a revival of religion—folks trample the law under their feet; we ought to have fewer laws and enforce 'em to the letter." This is in the middle of a prelude talk with statistics of crime and a plea for the Volstead act to be enforced everywhere.

This onesided conversation is ended in five minutes. There is a pause, some short announcements are made, the choir sings another gospel hymn; the evangelist is standing like the statue of a raven haired gladiator quietly behind the pulpit, his swift glances shooting between the book on the pine board pulpit desk and every nook and corner of the vast barnlike space filled with humanity.

Suddenly the silence of a minute is broken by his voice in the lower bass register reciting his text. His innate tendency to formality which frequently sticks out surprisingly in such a man causes him to take a formal text from the Bible always—though sometimes it is difficult

to connect the idea in the text with the theme of the following sermon, which occurs often enough among all preachers, however.

He's off! But not like a race horse when the barrier drops. He is standing still with legs apart as though on a quarter deck, his hands in the side pockets of his trousers, the bottom of his coat wrinkled above his wrists. He is talking, not conversationally as during the prelude, but oratorically, resonantly, slowly—for him—in short sentences with emphatic pauses between them. Now there are a few forearm gestures at intervals, when the hands slide from the pockets and slide back again. But all the time, without pause, not back and forth like a piston, but with the continuing motion of something actuated by a cam, his head is moving back and forth and sidewise to the limits of the ligaments of its joints. The long very thick, bushy hair begins to flop to this side and that, down over the forehead and across his eyes and quickly back over his pate; it is a very black plume somewhat loose and bedraggled at times, but yet the plume of a fighting knight getting into the thick of the fray.

The tempo becomes faster, the voice changes from the characteristics of the lyric woodwinds to those of the brass basses, with occasionally the thump of a Wagnerian bass drum. The hands are staying out of the trousers and moving with force, though not fast, and the arms gesture like those of steel cranes. Faster yet are now both sentences and body movements, ideas and gestures. Faster and louder he is in action, constantly, if gradually, faster and louder, as when a machine shop begins the day and the motors slowly pick up energy from electric wires. Within ten minutes from the standing start, he has reached the acme of his mental force, his voice and his action. But it has all increased so gradually and evenly that few

note any change—from gentle movement, gradually, very evenly, always gradually, from the purr of an automobile engine to the speed and power of a Pacific type locomotive racing over resounding switch points. The sermon is well under way. Its oratorical artistry and modulations aside, it keeps on the same voltage throughout.

The voice attracts our attention as we try to analyse the work of this evangelist in action. It is individual, not only as every man has a voice of his own which one may differentiate from all others easily, but in a different classification from the voices one has heard so often issuing from orators. It is orotund, of necessity in any orator, but it is much more than that. It is loud but not like a locomotive whistle. It is sonorous, but not merely like a musically toned siren. The only one word that will describe it is the Greek adjective that Homer was fond of using when he mentioned the sound of the sea on the shore. It is always loud enough to carry a mile, apparently, and strong enough to be heard when an open cut-out barks outside a window, but it is always delightfully modulated. Modulation of that big voice is like modeling sculpture of heroic size, but it can be done, as heroic statues can be made works of art. One thinks of pedal point on a big organ with the largest pipes in use.

But with that voice, curiously enough to one who has studied orators galore, this evangelist never uses it simply to touch a spark to explosives carefully laid in the audience; it never gives a quirk to the tail of a sentence to start a laugh by its own absurdity; it is never farcially used as a substitute for a slapstick to gain attention; the big audience roared with laughter once or twice, while we have been studying this preacher in action, but always at genuine comedy and never because of clowning. That voice is the voice of a real actor and not that of a

vaudeville artist; the laughter and tears and breathless attention of the audience is the product of a dramatist and not of vocal acrobatics. . . . .

. . . . But this tabernacle preacher has not yet taken off his coat nor even his cravat! By this time, whether it be in the middle of January or the last week in July, in Louisiana or Maine, the ordinary, garden variety of evangelist is disrobing, following the fixed fashion set by the founder of that school. The experienced tabernacle fan expects the preacher at the end of the first ten minutes to tear off his cravat with a wide arm sweep—it has been tied specially for that purpose—and throw it on the floor; in another half minute, the collar comes off with one full arm sweep, and before all this, the coat has been flung at a kitchen chair on the rear of the platform—it generally misses the chair and one of the things the chorister is paid a salary for is to stand by until time to pick up that coat and reverently fold it over the chair back.

But here is an evangelist who defends sensationalism and scorns buffoonery evidently, and who omits many of the stock tricks of his trade. And right here one becomes prepared for the disappointment of hearing this evangelist preach for a month running without once taking off his coat in the pulpit, even in the summer on the Carolina coastal plane. . . . .

. . . . One sits on the platform watching the audience during the sermon. In the beginning the multitude of faces may seem mildly interested, but on the whole restful. But waves of expression pass over the facial plane at irregular intervals, as the preacher chooses. Now a smile is rippling over the faces like the lightest of zephyrs caressing a field of ripe wheat. Now there is a distinct tightening of tension plainly perceptible all over the acre of seated humanity. Suddenly fans stop waving and the

whole assemblage becomes fixed as wax figures for a couple of minutes, and with the following relaxation is apt to come a big wave of laughter and fans vibrating more than ever. The laughing is checked as quickly as it came, and absorbed interest is written large on every face. Sometimes the people lean forward slightly and in unison, as though moved by some mechanism attached to all of them—there is the mechanics of real oratory. . . . .

. . . . As some marked change appears on the surface of faces, one looks toward the pulpit to discover the prime mover of the people. Big, brawny, every movement spelling restrained power, coal black hair thatching thickly the dome of his head, this preacher is standing to one side of the pulpit platform, facing the other side, and addressing somebody opposite. That the camera would not picture anybody there merely proves that dramatic genius recks of things beyond the limitations of silver salt chemistry. As he talks or argues, or roars into a tirade, one is carried back to the time when the elder Salvini was playing Othello in America; often this evangelist suggests the never to be forgotten evenings when one saw and heard the big and great Italian actor wooing Desdemona and in the end strangling her.

Sometimes it is melodrama, or even comedy, that one sees rather than tragedy . . . . a Biblical king issuing ukases . . . . a long march of nations marching past the platform . . . . a peg legged man stepping in a circle for a long time thinking he is on the way home. . . . . Back out of character the evangelist appears again and strolls down the steps and along in front of the first row of seats, quietly speaking in almost monotonous monologue. Or he steps slowly down to one side to stand in front of a good churchman who is seized to make an illustration for a section of the sermon. There is no pause in the flow of

talk at such times, and it is talking and not orating that he is doing. When the humor seizes him, he becomes a peripatetic preacher; generally he does not require much floor space behind his pulpit. Rarely, but occasionally, he stands on a bench of the choir to illustrate something raised to a height. And all of this paragraph we see in four minutes, or nine, alternating with some rhetoric of the schools and ordinary pulpit oratory. He is suiting the action to the word as naturally as a Frenchman gestures in conversation.

But not absolutely always does his action fit the word. Here comes one of those long trains of adjectives ahead of a noun—a sentence that causes one to watch for the ultimate word as one watches for the caboose at the end of a long passing freight train. But the preacher is not punctuating with gestures, a punch for each comma; he is sitting down on the single chair facing the audience as he might face a caller in his hotel room, and rolling out adjectives from his mouth as a strong of gondola cars come out of a railroad tunnel.

Standing in the usual posture of an orator; sitting down in a small wooden chair occasionally; but most of the time striding the boards of the platform like a talented tragedian, or facing about alternately while acting two roles in a monologue—thus we see this evangelist as his sermon goes on to its phase of harvesting souls.

The sermon does not really end. It just imperceptibly flows in another direction and becomes an invitation, then an urging, sometimes a suggestion with the force of a command, more often a plea, most often an argument, but always flowing on over a smooth, rock bottom. Not by any quick movements, but quietly, still talking, the evangelist has eased himself down off the platform and into the space before the front benches, saying over and

over, often repeating the same words, but with enough variations of phraseology to prevent any somnolent monotony, that now is the time to repent and become a christian.

There is nothing rhetorical in what he is saying now, but it is oratory by that definition of using language to cause people to do something. His voice is deeply, richly orotund all the time; there is not the least trace of the slight roughness sometimes heard in impassioned passages especially those in a high key, from the pulpit. The voice of so much modulation and roaring strength, like Wagnerian music, in the sermons, now takes on the musical sliding cadences of carols sung in the moonlight. Much of the compelling force in this part of this evangelist's work is due to the timbre and musical resonance of that voice which still fills the largest building and often can be heard understandingly across the street. . . . .

The choir sings a familiar verse of a gospel song. Harmonising with the last chord, the voice of the preacher glides on into more insistent sentences and urgings, sometimes with the attractive question, Will you come? At any one of the various cues the chorister has learned in the preacher's flowing speech, the choir sings another verse. Song verses and sections of almost as musical speech alternate . . . . *There is a fountain* . . . . Why do you put it off? . . . . *The way of the cross leads home* . . . . Do you know that there . . . . *There is wonderful power in the blood* . . . . If you young people . . . . *I am coming home* . . . . Tomorrow will never come; today is your opportunity . . . . *Nothing but the blood of Jesus* . . . . The Spirit strives always with you, but only once in a lifetime does it knock loudly at the door of your heart . . . . *Are you ready? Are you ready for that day?*
. . . . During all this antiphonal alternation of speech

and song, the evangelist has been in motion. For a minute he stands on a front bench and talks over the broad plane of faces before him. His movements are never hurried, but a minute later he is thirty feet up an aisle, and then back pacing the floor in front of the benches, back and forth, from end to end, and then up another aisle twenty feet . . . . a pause . . . . forward ten feet more . . . . back to the front and that pacing back and forth. And there is never a single moment when either his voice or the singing of the choir is not musically modulating its messages.

The man who is walking back and forth, up aisles, and stepping up on the end of a bench, is not at all the same man who has been thundering the warnings of Daniel and the accusations of John the Baptist from the pulpit platform with raven black hair tousled over his forehead which is lowered like that of a belligerent bull so often. This man walking and pleading on the floor level has his face slightly raised always; it is a face he shows in no other place and at no other time, a transfigured face alight with happiness, a serene face contradicting all troubles, such a face as a few old masters have painted and few men exhibit in the flesh. Of all the contrasts in this Baxter F. McLendon, that between his face while strenuously urging sinners to repent and his face during the rest of his life is the most remarkable. Sometimes his expressive face spells humor, or contumacy, or thoughtfulness, or combativeness, or endearment, or anger, or fatigue, or worry, or peaceful rest—but this face slightly lifted toward God in His heaven while he pleads to sinners to repent is the only face that opens a window into his innermost soul, a soul glowing with zeal to save sinners and radiating light from its inner fire. . . . .

. . . . There is no approach, no resolution of chords,

at the end. He simply stops, perhaps says goodnight, perhaps indicates by a few other words that the service is ended. With a sentence or two to each convert on the front bench, the finale comes without warning—even his well trained chorister can not guess when it is imminent. . . . .

One makes a note of his beckoning gesture of varied movement—and then one suddenly realizes that there is little gesture to be seen after all. But gestures are so timed and extended, or contracted, that there is a sense of a constant beckoning. It is a lesson in gesture without the least suggestion of Delsarte in it; it never was analysed by its inventor who is simply being himself; but its effect is, that his audience sees him continuously beckoning the sinner to the altar of repentance, however slight is the motion of his hands and arms.

As he beckons and urges and the choir sings, the sinners respond and come in a way conventional to revivals of large dimensions by great evangelists. Sometimes they dribble down the aisle that has been dubbed the sawdust trail one by one with long intervals and not many when totalled. Sometimes a dam breaks, and they surge forward in a wave of hurrying humanity. Sometimes they come in a steady stream like a little river flowing to the sea. Sometimes they stay pent up in the benches for a long time and then suddenly rush forward toward the beckoning preacher like the deep and wide water sweeping through a crevasse in a levee. But sooner or later, after some fashion or other, they come. They never fail to come in large ratio to the population of that town, be it a few hundreds or a number expressed by four figures.

And this evangelist violates the rule again, when he is careless about counting them. He very evidently is truthful when he says that the number of converts does not

interest him very much—he has never told the other half of the truth, that he is intensely interested in getting all the converts possible out of that congregation and community. He is like a fisherman who does not count his catch, but wants to leave the pool entirely destitute of fish before he unjoints his rod and closes his creel. Of course, nobody can attain a hundred percent efficiency in converting the sinners in any audience, any more than engineers can get all the potential water-power out of a river with their turbines. But as the engineers are striving for more and more power on the shaft of their water wheels, so this evangelist strives for a larger and larger percentage of sinners converted out of his audiences.

. . . . The audience departs. The rear battalion goes quickly through the nearest exits. The middle portion stands a little while looking curiously at the active christians who had occupied the seats toward the front and are now in considerable numbers slowly grouping around the new converts. There is much shaking of hands, but not much talking. The group in front mills around, disintegrates, filters out through the doors near at hand. The janitor comes into his own and begins to open electric light switches. The night services are entirely done . . . .

. . . . Those services of the night—the crowd, the sermon, the outstanding parts of the drama on the platform, the converts with more or less general personal interest in one or two of them perhaps—are talked about the next day in stores and offices and kitchens and beauty parlors and filling stations and in the streets by many people.

But that one night's meeting is in the past—there will be many more on successive nights, all in the same key, but no two of them exactly alike. The one described here is a fair picture of all of them, but is a photographic likeness of none of them.

The actual results of the first fifteen years of his evangelism must remove any shadow of doubt that Baxter F. McLendon was called to preach; that he adopted the method of preaching proper for himself; that his theses are correct, that the thing to preach is the simple gospel of Christ, that mankind is hungry for that simple religious food, and that God cares for the earnest workers in his vineyard whom He employs; and his other deeply rooted, constant belief that one may by hard work and determination pull one's self out of the swampland of poverty, social submergence and sordid squalor and place one's self finally on a high, solid rock where millions may see and admire and honor and trust.

Obviously, it is impossible to make a statistical statement of the fruits of his work after the fashion of a census table. It is not practicable to collect data with the detail of an engineering survey.

Characteristically, he never uses a card system of accounting in conversion. He is deeply concerned about making converts, and not at all about counting them. And he has not preserved any figures he obtained about any revival he ever held. He and his staff are as barren of information about the number of converts and the attendance at his meetings as Michigan is of magnolias. Apropos, he has no real scrap books of newspaper reports of his meetings, except for a few months when he had a secretary who pasted clippings properly, probably in spite of her employer. He has some scrap books started and stopped, like the average man's diary, but the vitals are omitted from even them.

The figures herein when round numbers are those obtained from newspaper files of the time and place and are the estimates of the reporters covering the revival; the precise numbers given here were obtained through the same channel, generally from the pastors of the town in which the meeting was held. Anyhow, it is preposterous to demand, or attempt, a statistical statement that like a balance sheet shall withstand the scrutiny of an expert auditor.

But it has been possible to collate some facts and figures with sufficient accuracy to satisfy a careful accountant and to tabulate the statistics of the result of the sermonising of this evangelist with really greater verity than precise decimals could prove.

Before midyear, 1927, he had held over one hundred-fifty revival meetings in as many places, and his audiences totalled over ten millions of people.

His converts number over a hundred thousand. One world's record he holds is putting 1,100 new members into one church in one meeting one month long. Another is that over two hundred men now preaching in their own pulpits were converted by this Baxter F. McLendon; nobody from Moody to Sunday approaches that particular result—and a result that talks more eloquently than any figures.

"McLendon has put more members into the churches than any other one man," testifies a man competent to give expert evidence on such things. That most of his converts are men, is another distinction.

About ninety per cent of his converts join some church, there is equally good an authority for saying. That is a much larger proportion than other evangelists attain—partly because they count revived churchmen card signers as converts, which McLendon does not do, and partly

because his converts stick well. They seem to acquire some of that persistency so marked in the evangelist and his McLendon and Swan ancestors.

A fact that would not have been believed in one of the first pages of this biography will be better understood by those who have read thus far and have become more or less habituated to the paradoxes in this story:

The man actually can not remember where he held meetings during the early years of his evangelistic work! They were very interesting to him then, but his interest was in making converts to christianity and not in the name of the cotton mill settlement in which he pitched his tent temporarily. Those first few years were very important to him in many ways, especially in his development, and they had important results to the settlements involved; but consideration of them in this chapter must be omitted on account of the difficulty in getting any concrete data about them which can be entered into an account current and verified by daybook entries.

A search of files of newspapers reporting meetings as they occurred, the use of notes made at the time by men who attended some meetings throughout a campaign, and divers documentary scraps of many kinds, make the basis of this incomplete, but fair, synopsis of his results in evangelising. While it omits the first couple of years, it is a complete list of places for the last six years ending in July, 1927.

No attempt at chronological sequence is made here, and to begin two contrasting towns may be taken. At Corbin, Kentucky, the 1,200 seat capacity of the First Methodist church limited his audiences to about 2,000 persons. In Spencer, North Carolina, the attendance at several single services reached 7,000 with 10,000 at least

once; business closed the doors of its stores during the hours of the services; the number of converts was not even an index of the religious awakening throughout that territory.

About as near a norm as one can get, including surmounting adverse circumstances, is Blackwell, Oklahoma. Continual rain and muddy roads limited the attendance to residents of that little city and those living within a radius of a few miles. But there were 5,500 people at one service and audiences of 5,000 were not uncommon. Over 100,000 was the total for the month. The converts numbered 1,013. Governor Johnson made an address introducing Evangelist McLendon and praising his work at the opening service.

One of his big meetings was at Lynchburg, Virginia, where he drew 7,000 people twice on the first day of the seen in that city. The converts numbered 3,988, and all the period of the revival. After the first week, the newspaper said some of the audiences were the largest ever seen in that city. The converts numbered 3, 988, and all this followed about a year after Rev. William A. Sunday had held a series of meetings there and apparently fed it up on evangelistic work. Incidentally and perhaps trivially, this delver for figures finds that the cost per convert in the Sunday campaign was $4.33, while the cost per convert by McLendon was $1.88. On the last day of the McLendon meetings, the converts numbered 680.

At Lincolnton, North Carolina, there were 6,000 in his congregation at the first service and 16,000 on one Sunday two weeks later.

At historic Richmond, Virginia, the audiences often reaching 7,000 in number were said by a newspaper to be representative of the whole city with all classes and kinds of people in them.

At Durham, North Carolina, 12,000 people came out to hear this evangelist on the day he opened his meetings there, 8,000 came on one night, and the average attendance was over 5,000, with a total reaching 150,000 by newspaper computation. One day three hundred ministerial students of Trinity college came in a body to hear this uncommon preacher. There were 653 converts.

Greensboro, North Carolina, yielded 803 converts, with 10,000 people out to the revival one night and 14,000 on another day.

Monroe, North Carolina, gave him audiences of 5,000 more or less when he held meetings there, and sometimes 6,000 people attended a service.

At Fort Worth, Texas, his revival was solely in and for one Baptist church, to which he added 1,101 new members. The church seats 5,400 persons and over 6,000 crowded it most of the time. Several records for revivalism were broken during this meeting.

McLendon went to the First Baptist church of Okmulgee, Oklahoma, for four weeks in January-February, 1924, and preached to audiences testing its utmost capacity. The following November, he returned to the same city with a tent in which he preached to 3,000 to 6,000 people for some weeks until a storm wrecked the tent, when he went to the church and continued for a total of five weeks. This preaching every night and Sunday afternoon for nine weeks in the same town to constantly increasing audiences is a record, certainly not equaled by lay oratory of any type, and probably never exceeded by any pulpit orator in the same calendar year.

There were 2,400 converts at Portsmouth, Ohio, when the services were held in a tabernacle seating 3,500 persons, with of course the attendance being much more than

the figure as the building was crowded and every inch of possible standing room occupied.

It seems like another Pentecost to read in a Raleigh, North Carolina, newspaper of 800 converts professing Christ at a single service during the meetings there. On one Sunday night there were 10,000 people listening to the sermon, after an attendance of 7,000 that same afternoon. This seems to be the record number of converts at any one service, second place going to Lynchburg, Virginia, with its 680 in one day. This was in April, 1919.

Another Raleigh, in West Virginia, held its McLendon revival in a theater with 1,200 seats in January, 1925, and the standing room only sign was displayed most of the time.

The Baptist auditorium used in Atlanta, Georgia, was built for a congregation of 3,200 and inside and outside its doors four or five thousand listeners to the sermons became commonplace.

Holding his meeting in a tent with a capacity of 6,000 people, he preached to 8,000 a number of times, and 10,000 once or twice, in North Wilksboro, North Carolina.

A warehouse seated for 2,500 persons at Robertsonville, North Carolina, proved entirely too small for the attraction of this evangelist, in 1921.

The Calvary Baptist church of Wilmington, North Carolina, seated over 1,000 persons and as many more as possible crowded into it.

Kannapolis, North Carolina is not a large city, but the congregations at the tent meetings there ranged between 5,000 and 10,000 in numbers.

Audiences of from 5,000 to 10,000 and on some nights more in uncounted crowds, attended the McLendon meetings in Rockingham, Clinton and White Oak, North Caro-

lina, Beckley, West Virginia, Greenville and Spartanburg, South Carolina, Bristol, Tennessee, to summarize great things in a paragraph.

At Portsmouth, Ohio, where he began in January, 1925, the evangelist was taken sick twice, and the meetings lasted into March while occupying only four weeks of actual work. On December 20, of the same year, at Spartanburg, South Carolina, he broke down completely from overwork at the end of the revival and was in the hands of physicians for seven months. But both these meetings were successful in the religious awakening they gave the communities, even when the evangelist was much handicapped by illness.

Out at Holdenville, Oklahoma, his four weeks meeting was held in the national guard armory fitted with seats for 1,800 people, and his audiences were generally crowded in to the extent of 2,500 persons.

Away out in Pasadena, California, he preached in the First Nazarene church, and while his hearers there could never be more than 2,000, the newspapers gave him tens of thousands to reach every day.

He could give only two weeks to Petersburg, Virginia, and as usual the Baptist church seating 1,100 people was many times too small.

During his month at Greenfield, Ohio, about 3,000 persons heard the most of his sermons in the community building offered for that purpose.

At Chilicothe, Ohio, the big tent with 3,000 seating capacity was used, and 5,000 persons were crowded in and around it to hear his gospel.

Of similar dimensions was the meeting at Union, South Carolina, in that same year of 1925, and there Governor McLeod of that state introduced Evangelist McLendon in a laudatory address.

Mount Olive, North Carolina, gave him audiences up to 5,000 during his four weeks there in the autumn of 1926.

The revival at LaGrange, North Carolina, immediately following that at Mount Olive, was similar in size and results.

The building at Oak Hill, West Virginia, restricted his audiences to about 2,000 people.

At Canton, Ohio, his meetings were held when the city was torn up by celebrated murder trials growing out of a newspaper's exposure of police protection of the vice element and the consequent assassination of its managing editor. The church seated only 2,000, and the audiences were limited, but the laity of the church were benefited greatly, they said, for the simple, old time gospel reached many not before interested in christianity.

At Cunard, West Virginia, he had a very successful revival of two weeks duration with the church jammed all the time. On the last Sunday of the schedule, the evangelist and his converts were being photographed before the morning service in front of the church, when the building caught fire from the furnace and burned. The McLendon club raised $14,000 for a new church which he dedicated a few months later, in July, 1927.

He preached for four weeks in Farmville, Virginia, in February-March, 1927, and attracted audiences of from 2,000 to over 3,000 every night while he was under the constant treatment of a physician with a trained nurse with him all the time he was not on the platform, and the neurologist could not be sure at any time whether the evangelist would be able to preach a day longer. This was a striking instance of the McLendon persistence and determination, but it nearly cost him his life. After a rest of only a week, he went on into the big meeting of Blackwell, Oklahoma, detailed above.

He was in Apex, North Carolina, in midsummer, 1927, preaching in a big, brick building converted from a cotton warehouse into a tabernacle by its christian owner for the free use of evangelism. The owner, M. C. Sorrell, who endowed the tabernacle, selected Baxter F. McLendon to open it formally for gospel purposes. In four weeks the attendance reached over 125,000 and on most nights there were in the seats a number of people three to five times the population of the town of Apex, some coming from Virginia, West Virginia, and South Carolina.

During the same summer of 1927, he held a revival at Brevard, North Carolina, at the instigation of the mayor, chiefly, which resulted in 216 conversions and over 1,500 regenerations of church members.

Then, at the end of the Brevard meetings, the adjoining town of Rosman called the evangelist for a two weeks campaign there which was marked by over two hundred converts and a great spiritual awakening of the entire community. All the local ministers, churches, town officials and industrial executives worked hand in hand with Evangelist McLendon, and the newspaper says the most important result of the revival was the wiping out of factions and personal antagonisms from the populace.

In October, 1927, a successful revival was held at Great Falls, South Carolina, with tremendous spiritual good acomplished,over 1,500 converts and audiences of 5,000 to 8,000 persons. Governor Richards made the opening address of the meetings and at the end came back to lead a big parade of the converts and workers in the evangelistic campaign. The revival was prolonged a week at the urgent insistence of many people, including the chief of police, who cited a great falling off in petty crime since the revival began.

The most important meeting, to himself, that Baxter F. McLendon ever held, the most dramatic, and one of the very best in character and results was the revival he conducted in his home town of Bennettsville, South Carolina, after he had progressed out of the mill towns into real success as a master evangelist.

He was a prophet in his own country. Jesus Himself failed to make the impression on the communities which knew him as a boy that He did during his travels away from the home of his youth. Human nature is about the same, basically, as it was two thousand years ago. Baxter McLendon also knew the greatest impression he had made on the people of Bennettsville was of a young man, champion and constant poker player, bootlegger, six-gun shooter, quarry of a big hunt in the swamps toward Clio of a big sheriff's posse, and all round ne'er-do-well useful chiefly to warn children to avoid as a bad example.

Some of the folks, indeed most of the church people, had shown abiding confidence in his conversion and call to preach by helping him to prepare for his ministry; but the subscribers to that fund were numerically in the minority; how did the mass population of the town and vicinity look upon him now, and especially how did they look upon his preaching the gospel? Had his preaching raised himself, or had it lowered the gospel and the pulpit, in the minds of the generality of the people of Bennettsville?

He not only wanted to show those folks that he had become a real preacher—he wanted most of all to wipe out the horrible spectacle he had made as a speaker at a certain prayer meeting there, in the beginning of his new life. This was natural in anybody, and many times more natural in the character we have been studying for so many pages. Equally characteristic of his careful prep-

aration in all things is the fact—unknown there to this day—that he employed a detective agency to ascertain and report to him precisely how all sorts of people considered him and what they really thought about him. Upon that report would depend whether he would hold a revival in his old home town.

The report on hundreds of conversations about Baxter McLendon between a very shrewd and artful operative and the unsuspecting and candid citizens was as gratifying as it was complete, although it contained some surprises; some people he expected to damn him praised him, and some others he thought would brag on him condemned him. Over nine-tenths of them admired him for overcoming such difficult obstacles to enter the lists against the devil; so he decided to hold a revival in Bennettsville.

He began it with some degree of trepidation, at times misgivings. He might not have undertook it but for the combination of trust in the Lord and a human desire to show those folks.

It ended a big success. Prominent men who never before or since found time from business to boost a revival worked for that one as though a governorship were at stake with Marlboro county holding the balance of power. The preachers of the town soon took the places the laymen had prepared for them. The populace swarmed to his meetings; his audiences were crowds, and the thousands continued to come after curiosity had been satisfied —at first he attracted them, because they knew so much about his past life; soon they were coming, because they were learning so much about his present power as a preacher.

He preached every night for six weeks, and his regiments of converts were unnumbered. He had shown the home folks. From that time, they forgot Baxter McLen-

don the ne'er-do-well and thought only of Baxter F. McLendon the evangelist who gives the town importance by living there.

When a sentence has changed the course of history, and a word caused a war between two world powers, when a statement by a teacher centuries ago has modified civilization, it is preposterous to undertake to determine the indirect effects of a solid month of steam hammer preaching by an evangelist in some town or city. Each new convert is but the starting point for long trains of events spreading in all directions like rays of light from a newly lighted lamp.

Some of these indirect effects are narrated in letters written Baxter F. McLendon, some soon after the close of a revival and some long after the conversion of the writer. There is not room here for printing such letters—and selection of parts of them is impossible on account of so many of them being worth reading and study. They prove the lasting quality and durability of the regeneration of the life caused by the labors of this evangelist. They also often demonstrate the value of a renewal of the christian spirit in the soul become troubled which his sermons create. Much of this is summed up in one long letter written the evangelist which may be mentioned here because it is comprehensive of all this.

A brilliant woman, prominent among college faculty members in Virginia, had led a very religious life in her youth and latterly had become staggered somewhat by the theological debates prevalent in her environment at the end of the first quarter of the Twentieth century. She attended one of Baxter F. McLendon's revivals, and after it closed wrote him how she had been greatly heartened by hearing him preach the simple but strong gospel of the olden time with so much certitude, saying:

I can not refrain from conveying to you our thanks and appreciation for the good you have brought to us and for the joy we have experienced in attending your services.

In the same letter, on another phase of his work, she wrote:

One of your converts said to us—probably he mentioned it to you—that one of the most distinctive features of your preaching was that after leading a man to repent and accept Jesus, you went further and told him concretely just what he should do to continue living for Christ. Too many preachers and evangelists think they have done enough when they convert a man and lead him to make a public confession.

The remarkable practical quality of the religion impressed upon his audiences by this preacher is demonstrated by the comment of Col. Ernest Chilson, leading coal magnate of West Virginia, and general manager of one of the largest coal and coke companies in that field, who on his own motion told about his observations as an employer of hundreds of miners as to the effect of this evangelist's sermons upon the senseless but eternal conflict in industrialism. Col. Chilson is a captain of industry who has commanded in some big fights with organized labor, and of late years he has been doing all possible to aid in the dissemination of the gospel as preached by Evangelist McLendon. He said, as this book was getting the finishing touches, and it is the testimony of an expert witness looked upon by the coal operators in the West Virginia field as their dean and leader in the solution of all their problems:

I have never seen a personality just like this Baxter McLendon's. Since McLendon came to preach in the West Virginia coal fields, everything works smoothly. Our men are sober and reasonable and selfrespecting and join us in seeking better living conditions. It is a very remarkable change in the attitude of the miners which we meet at least half way.

McLendon by his preaching in his pulpits has accomplished what I had been trying for years to accomplish by force, law, persuasion and every other means with only moderate success, and McLendon achieved a hundred per cent efficiency in practical results. Before he came, many of the men though useful were immoral; since he came, they are more valuable employees, because he converted them. We give McLendon the credit for all the changed conditions, and every operator says the same thing who has had the experience of having him conduct a revival in their camps. We have had other evangelists come and go without much perceptible benefit, but I consider McLendon a very exceptional man and one of the most interesting human beings I have ever met. I love the man for his personality, as well as respect him for his work for christianity.

Without going any further into the indirect results and rewards of Baxter F. McLendon's revivals, some effects are so near as to belong to the more direct sequences of a series of meetings. The city officials, especially the chief of police, of an Oklahoma town, after hearing him in a neighboring city, urgently requested him to hold a revival for them, to lessen their burden of lawlessness. The governors of states show their approval by traveling from the capital to make a powerful address of introduction of the evangelist to the people of an important city. Frequently leading citizens, merchants and manufacturers, captains of finance and industry, take the initiative in having a call sent to Evangelist McLendon to come for a revival, because the town needs one.

A preacher who impresses statesmen, politicians, merchants and manufacturers with the value of the kind of gospel of righteousness he preaches is getting results that can not be measured in terms of counting crowds or numbering converts.

There seems no good reason why a nonsectarian writer should seek to avoid the fact, known to all, of the interesting rivalry existing between churches when there are only two or three denominations operating in one town.

For any man or woman of any prominence whatever to leave one denomination and join another causes a sensation almost as great as when the banker's son elopes with the leading merchant's daughter, or when the doctor's wife changes milliners. Those who have lived in towns with only two churches can imagine what would occur where people talk together, if the county judge should suddenly switch from avowal of the Westminster Confession to allegiance to the Discipline.

Such readers of this story of one life can comprehend what occurred when the town was magnified into a state—a number of states—in area and population, and it was not the county judge, but the most famous preacher in that domain who changed his denomination without previous notice or warning. That was real news; but so startling and unbelievable news, that the papers at first handled it very cautiously, overworking such subterfuges as "report" and "rumor" and "can not be confirmed" which are part of the technic of the newspaper craftsman. One paper printed this careful news story:

Report comes from Asheville that Cyclone Mack, who preached in a revival meeting here recently under the auspices of Calvary Baptist church, has left Methodism and joined the Baptist denomination. The report is not confirmed, but comes via Raleigh and elsewhere.

The story that has reached this section is, that Mack at a recent meeting told his congregation to follow his own example, study the Bible, take it at its word, go and

Photo by Ackley

Governor Richards, of his home state (left), after the governor made the prelude address at the beginning of the Great Falls revival in which he gave Baxter F. McLendon (right) the highest possible praise as a preacher and a great force for Christianity.

be baptized, and be baptized all over. And this can't be confirmed.

Like all reports by word of mouth traveling any considerable distance, the only direct quotation in that story was the untruth in it. Baxter F. McLendon, dubbed Cyclone Mack by some newspaper men one time, and affectionately called Mack by his best friends, has never told any congregation in any sermon to follow his example to the extent of being baptized all over—but he had joined the Baptist fellowship not long before that publication.

The first carefully worded publications by the newspapers were soon followed by duly verified news of the fact of the change. It was the most talked about event in that part of the United States that had occurred in many moons. A flood of letters came to the evangelist, many from old acquaintances who could not believe the report until he himself confirmed it. Some were fearful and some others hopeful—that the Baptist church would monopolise his usefulness, if the report were true; others simply knew it was a canard. One man wrote that at prayer meeting he denied the report and argued that Brother Mack could do the Baptist church as much good in his evangelism while a member of the Methodist church as though he were a Baptist; when the others quoted a newspaper to him, he went home and read it in the paper, but next day still assured people it must be a mistake.

It did not take Baxter F. McLendon long to realise that so purely personal a matter as to what church he should belong was not a personal, but a very public matter, in the case of a preacher of his reputation and broad sphere of influence reaching from the Atlantic of the Carolina coast to the Pacific at Pasadena. There was nothing whatever to conceal about his action—he did not at first appreciate its news value as the telegraph editors did.

He has told all the facts whenever, wherever and to whomever it seemed right, but has never exploited nor dramatised them for the mere sake of telling that he once changed denominations. He attaches less importance to it than some other people did—and no auditor of all his sermons could determine from them to what denomination he belongs today.

A church in this day of progress and unlimited development is a very different ideal from that of the middle ages, when such a thing as religious freedom was impossible. Now, each of the churches is a religious republic with a definite head and a set of rules which each man accepts when he becomes a member of the organization. When joining it, he formally obligates himself to obey these rules, and if for any reason he finds this impossible—on account of himself, or because of the rules—his remedy is to remove his membership. In this present case, a man was surprised to find that the polity of a church as administered in his ecclesiastical domain antagonised what he felt to be his life work ordained by omnipotence and disclosed to him distinctly; that the interpretation of its rules by the South Carolina annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was far removed from what he had always understood to be their basic essence. He felt that there had been a misunderstanding about it all in the beginning, and the conference by its later actions had left him outside that particular sheepfold, where he found himself placed by it and not by himself.

"I want it distinctly understood that I did not quit the Methodist church; the Methodist church quit me", is the most emphatic of his sentences about the change of name. The story is short and easily understood.

Its prelude, before the story itself begins, takes us

back to Greenville and those five preachers who signed there a declaration of war on one lone evangelist who had been attending to his own business and that of his Master and had gone there on the invitation of three of the leading ministers of the town. Out of that warfare on him came the hegira to North Carolina and his warm welcome there; also the strategic position his enemies held in the state of South Carolina and its annual conference of the Methodist church which practically prevented him from preaching in the state of his birth, conversion and first ministry. In that warfare waged on him, he had the constant friendliness and support of the Baptist and Presbyterian clergy. But even that onesided situation, with all his enemies Methodists and fighting him like the devil, did not in the least urge him to leave that denomination, for he recognised that while all his enemies were Methodists, many Methodists were his warm friends and admirers, and he had no desire to leave the church on account of the action of a coterie of its clergy.

Then, in 1921, came the invitation to hold a meeting in the largest church in the United States, that of the Rev. J. Frank Norris in Fort Worth, Texas. It resulted in the greatest revival ever held in one church with over 1,100 new members added to its rolls, and it was a milestone in revivalistic work. During the four weeks of that meeting, nineteen Baptist churches all over the country sent him invitations to come to them and hold revivals. Previously for some years, most of his calls had come from Baptist churches and the rest from Presbyterian churches. It was in that atmosphere and under such conditions that the climax arrived, brought by a committee of members of that Fort Worth Baptist church.

That committee called on him and casually asked

where the invitations to hold meetings were coming from. He told them from Baptist churches principally. The committee then asked whether the Methodists were using his services much and were told no. Then, why not come over and join with the people who are utilizing your power and preaching, who appreciate you best, and value you most? In that Socratic manner, that committee started its argument. When he told them it was too much of a strain on ties for him to leave the Methodist church, they retired—but they came back with reiterated arguments. It took them three days and nights to persuade the evangelist to change his church membership to the denomination that during his best preaching years had been consistently and unanimously his friend.

For there was more to the decision than simply that. That father and mother of such strong character, Scotch stubbornness and Irish combativeness were partizan Methodists. Their son Baxter was now in middle age, but the parental influence was nearly as strong as when he was watching crows, filling fertilizer distributors and reading Macaulay on the plantation; certainly he did not want to cause them any sorrow as they approached old age. His wife and children were also members of the Methodist church in Bennettsville—and are yet—and the children especially would find it difficult to understand any change. His brother, from whose death he has never recovered, was a Methodist minister. Such ties are not to be rudely nor lightly broken, he told that Baptist committee.

And when he did change his church membership from one sect of the christian church to another division of the great holy catholic church of the Apostle's creed, he did it in genuine sorrow and not the least in anger. It simply was the inevitable occurring, the resultant of many divergent and opposing forces put into action through years

by an inscrutable Providence. It had no real effect on him and very little on his work—perhaps it made him even more careful to avoid sectarian subjects or references in his sermons, but that is all.

While he had real concern about the views his family and close friends would take of his action, he had little about the reactions of people in general, which he believed would be confined largely to news interest in the matter. He felt that religious intolerance has practically passed away, and patient understanding is sought and has become the ideal of all modern churchmen. This is especially true in republics like ours, because the spirit of true democracy develops the ideas of the individual as the basis of action. He knew, however, that christianity has not entirely escaped its inheritance from the early church which fell heir to the Jewish creed that salvation was a matter of race and dependent upon certain officially established institutions; salvation was in their mind only for one especially favored people and to those accepting a certain officially determined creed. Yet he felt that this test of dogmatism has practically passed away among christians of all sects, and in this modern time he would receive little criticism from true churchmen because he enrolled himself in another denomination. The most important thing to him, and what was uppermost in his mind, was the effect on his nearest kin.

Before he arrived at home from Fort Worth, both he and the newspapers had informed his family about it all. At home, he met no blame, no arguments, only deep sympathy. His stern, taciturn, Scotch, Methodist father clasped his hand tightly, and though the tears were in his eyes said: "Son, I'm sorry, but I can't blame you." His wife, who has always understood him more thoroughly than any other person in or out of the family, knew

that he feared only blame from those who were more partizan than pious; she put her arms around his neck and silently told him she sympathised with him and understood. Almost before the home greetings were over, there came a telegram from a leading Methodist woman of culture and brains in another town in South Carolina which said:

I have watched you preach in numerous campaigns, have entertained you in my home, watched and studied you closely, and the only weak spot I have ever seen in your life was staying in the Methodist church as long as you did after receiving the treatment you did by the small men of the South Carolina conference.

Other such messages from all kinds of people heartened him, for his only care was, that his act should not be imputed to little, mean, revengeful motives, when in fact it had nothing small in it and came out of considerations of the highest justice toward friends who had held up his hands so long and so well. In his heart he knew that his position had been forced by circumstances created by a few earnest and powerful enemies. He has said:

"I would have been in the Methodist church today, satisfied and doing the very best work I could, if it had not been for an ex-presiding elder and four little preachers that started the ball rolling when they signed that paper at Greenville."

As a matter of fact, it is evident that with his emphasis upon only the essentials of salvation, and the great emphasis he places on those fundamentals, he would be at home in any denomination which is entirely orthodox. He is perfectly at home in the Baptist church, his references to it prove. He has said in sermons and interviews:

It is a church that believes in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. They believe what God says, because God says so, and God's saying so makes it so. They are not apologising or compromising. They believe in the old-

fashioned backwoods religion. . . . . They are whittling off to a point, not fighting theological nonessential sham battles, splitting hairs over trifles.

There could hardly be put into the same number of words a more exact and more complete epitome of what Baxter F. McLendon believes and teaches in the pulpit than that. That kind of church was made to fit him, or he was formed to fit that kind of church. He fits in there perfectly, and by the same token there is nothing objectionable to any other orthodox denomination or its adherents in that very condensed statement of faith.

The Baptists welcomed him warmly and have always continued to treat him cordially. Since he became one of them, as before, they have encouraged him in every way, always upheld his hands, and continued to furnish the majority of the invitations to campaign he receives. Other denominations invite him to hold meetings for them sometimes; they often, indeed generally, unite to ask him to hold union meetings in a town or city, but for many years a large proportion of the calls to come help them have been received from the Baptists.

It was that same fact in the past, the fight made on him by the coterie of Methodist ministers at Greenville, and the skillful work of that committee at Fort Worth—the combination of these three things is the reason this evangelist happens to be on the rolls of the Baptist church today. Not that that makes much difference in anything much in either his life or his work, but because it is an episode in his career, it must be recorded in any biographical narrative of him.

RD
5/92